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THE LIFE

MONSIEUR CLAUDE.

THE LIFE

OF

MONSIEUR CLAUDE.

CHAPTER I.

FRANCIS CLAUDE was a Pastor of great piety, performing his office with much honour in the churches of Montbaziliac and Cours, near Bergerac, in Lower Guienne, where he died in his seventy-fourth year. He had a son called John Claude, a famous Minister of the Gospel, whose Life I now undertake to write, for the bestowing upon his memory an instance of the esteem and affection I had for him, and the gratifying the desire of such as, only knowing him by his writings, will, as is very natural, be curious to be informed of the principal circumstances of the life and death of this great man.

Monsieur Claude was born at Salvetat, in the year 1618. His father, being a lover of polite learning, took care of his education during his youth, after which he went to finish his studies

in the academy of Montauban. There did Monsieur Claude study philosophy : his mind, beginning to find matter to exercise itself upon, made him to be quickly distinguished from all the other students in philosophy ; and though he was no harder student than his companions, yet the flame of his imagination carried him so far, that he made greater progress in that science in six months than his fellow-students in a year.

After he had accomplished his course in philosophy, he began to study divinity under Messieurs Garrisoles and Charles, Professors in that Academy. He more particularly applied himself to Monsieur Charles, whose memory he honoured all his life long. I know not whether the conformity of these two great geniuses might not from that time contract this union of hearts ; for as Monsieur Claude had an admiration for his master, we may also affirm, that the master delighted in the character of his disciple ; that he loved him tenderly, and spake of him as of a young man of most hopeful expectation.

His father, being desirous to see him in the sanctuary, hastened the time of his reception into the ministry ; for he was not twenty-five years old when he was admitted as Minister. He lost thereby the opportunity of travelling, of seeing other universities, that of Saumur especially, where were Professors of such vast learning, and where was to be found that politeness of lan-

guage and manners which rarely passes beyond the Loire, and which nevertheless was so much his province.

He was admitted Minister in the synod of Upper Guienne, and Upper Languedoc, in the year 1645. He was assigned Minister to the church at La Treyne; his father was nominated by the synod to ordain him; and he had this comfort, which is the greatest a man of his character can receive. Monsieur Claude served this church but one year.

The synod of Upper Languedoc appointed him the church of Saint Afrique, in Rovergue, to supply the place of Monsieur Martel. This church was not considerable for a numerous congregation, but had been served by Ministers of extraordinary merit. Monsieur Gaches, who died Pastor at Paris, and Monsieur Martel, Professor of Divinity, had there exercised their ministry; and this little flock, glorying in those two great names, imagined that, for the keeping up of its fame, it could not do better than to pitch upon Monsieur Claude.

In sciences, as in war, great men are not accomplished in a day. Art, as well as nature, requires time and industry. Monsieur Claude studied hard at St. Afrique, though his sermons took him up less time than his other studies, as he preached with great facility. He had a wit that easily conceived things, a judgment that did not

fail of disposing each subject in its due place ; an expression so fluent, so easy, so just, and so masculine, that people could not easily distinguish what he said extempore, from what he had written. The church of Castres, famous for the honour it had of possessing in its bosom the officers of the Chamber of the Edict of Nantes, and a vast number of other persons of quality and learning, entreated Monsieur Claude in his passing that way, to give them a sermon. He preached there one Sunday, and filled his whole auditory with admiration, so far as to give occasion to a very singular declamation which a very able man made in favour of him, and which the public will possibly be glad to be informed of, since it redounds to his honour. A numerous company were discoursing of Monsieur Claude's sermon ; ladies there were that spake their opinions ; those of the best sense were extremely well satisfied with it ; others, of the order of those that a little too much mind the Preacher's voice, face, and actions, durst not openly pass their verdict ; and stayed first to know a worthy person's judgment then present. I am persuaded they did not expect so smart an answer, when they heard him say, that he could wish with all his heart he had but one eye, like that Minister, provided he was capable of preaching as well as he. There needed no more to persuade them that he had preached very well, since this gentle-

man, who was a person extremely handsome, valued that sermon at so high a rate.

This sermon made a strong impression upon people's minds, so far that the officers of the Chamber of the Edict, wanting a Minister, several of them cast their eyes upon Monsieur Claude; but there were motives also that brought another into the election; the lot was cast upon these two Pastors; and Providence, that had destined Monsieur Claude for something greater, deprived the church of Castres of the comfort it would have received from his ministry.

But if the church of Castres had not the honour of having Monsieur Claude for its Minister, it had the pleasure of seeing that he came to choose a wife in its bosom; and that it thereby acquired a kind of right over this great man. He there married Mademoiselle Elizabeth de Malcare, on November 8th, 1648. The choice of a man of that merit speaks in favour of her that was to be his wife. She came of a very good family; her father was Advocate in Parliament; she made good her birth; and the declaration which Monsieur Claude made in her behalf, which will be seen in this history, justifies the esteem and affection he had for her till death.

Monsieur Claude served the church of St. Afrique for the space of eight years, being beloved by his flock, known and desired by several churches, esteemed and honoured in the synod of

Upper Languedoc ; whereat he was annually present : but amidst all these blessings he considered as the most precious the birth of a son which God gave him according to his heart, on Wednesday, March 5th, 1653, and who was named Isaac Claude. It so fell out at this time that the church of Nismes, which was one of the best churches in France, sought within and without the provinces for a man that could bear the weight of that burden ; a Minister, in short, that was proper for preaching, for disputation, and the conduct of a great flock. Monsieur Claude's reputation being spread far and near, made them quickly determine upon the choice they were to make. They sent as deputies to him, gentlemen of the greatest eminence, that they might not miss their aim. These gentlemen discoursed with him, made him most obliging offers, and accomplished their design ; for he was appointed Minister of their church by the synod of Upper Languedoc.

The service of this church was very painful. The preaching there was every day ; the sick taking up a great deal of the Minister's time ; ecclesiastical matters requiring no less application ; yet Monsieur Claude was not startled at this new task. He found time sufficient to accomplish all his duties. The beauty of his genius and his industry provided for all the occasions of his flock.

How much soever busied in the common functions of his office, he found leisure to begin a work which he would have finished, but for a disappointment that broke his measures. He was refuting the method of Cardinal de Richelieu, when he heard that the synod of Lower Guienne had given that employment to Monsieur Martel, Professor of Divinity. He would not stand candidate with his brother in the Gospel ; and the deference he had for the company whence he held his commission caused him to lay his pen aside.

As Monsieur Claude was born for a chair of divinity, and his mind naturally turned that way, there was always in Nismes a considerable number of students in divinity, so far advanced as to be admitted to make probationary sermons, to whom he read lectures of divinity. His way of teaching was so neat ; the matters he explained seemed so well meditated, and so happily fitted to the use of the pulpit and to the understanding of holy writ ; that he caused them to make no less progress in the knowledge of divinity, than in the best academies. Hence came a great concourse of divinity students ; and there have been seen to come from this kind of private school disciples of merit, that made good the pains of the master that instructed them.

Monsieur Claude's ministry was too successful in Nismes, in the opinion of the Roman Catho-

lics. The rumour of his reputation, daily augmenting, was a sound that wounded their ears ; a certain presage that he would not be long at quiet. And indeed he was snatched from that church by one of those extraordinary ways which people of his character and singular worth daily experience. His knowledge, his steadiness, his zeal, created a jealousy in a man whose sentiments were not so upright as his. Monsieur Claude, knowing that this man espoused the project of our ruin, under the specious veil of an accommodation of religion, openly opposed this design. There needed no more to fetch Monsieur Claude from Nismes. A decree of Council was intimated to him, by which he was interdicted the exercise of his ministry throughout the whole extent of the province of Languedoc. He forbore preaching, and went to the Court, being only supported by his innocence : he there prosecuted his concern for nearly six months, but all in vain ; for the resolution was already taken, not to revoke the least of any thing that had been done against the Protestants ; and more especially to weary out the Ministers who were not pleasing to the Governors of the provinces.

In this journey he composed that little tract which answers that of "The Perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholic Church touching the Eucharist." This was his first piece that was made public. This tract of his made a noise in the world ; the

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Roman Catholics were at a loss to know the author's name. The Jansenists, who felt the weight of the blow, would needs know the hand from whence it came; but all the pains they took in order to this discovery were for a long while all in vain; and we may say, that, as they have laughed at the uneasiness the Jesuits had been under to find out the author of the "Provincial Letters," they in their turn made this occasion their diversion, as did many other people who were not sorry to see an author stand forth, who alarmed that party by a work of thirty pages.

This little tract did Monsieur Claude so much honour, that it well deserves we enlarge a little upon it; and the particular circumstances that it affords will reward the reader for the time he may bestow upon what we are going to say of it.

The tract of "The Perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholic Church touching the Eucharist," composed by an able Jansenist, believed to be Monsieur Arnaud, had Monsieur de Turenne in view. The Court had the same aim in persuading him to change his religion; and the Jansenists, espousing this design, hoped to acquire honour by this conquest; but as he was a Prince, who, without playing the Divine, had a right sense to judge whether the argument was good or bad, it was necessary to choose a matter that was beyond the common reach of his light in religion, and to pass his understanding, by drawing him

into the vast fields of antiquity ; being a region proper to impose upon strangers and new comers, who do not well know the map of that country. No fitter subject for a trepan could have been chosen than that pitched upon by this author. He pretended to prove that the doctrine of the real presence had been the constant faith of the Church, till the time of the Reformation ; a great prepossession in France, for a heart that wished for a religion that accommodated itself with his fortune. The turn which this writer took was very ingenious. "How," said he, "a thousand years of peaceable possession, and profound silence, do they not sufficiently justify the faith of the Church upon this article ? It peaceably enjoyed its right till Beranger ; and as soon as this man offered to open his mouth to combat this truth, all rose up against him, and he was condemned by the first Council held at Rome, by Pope Leo IX., in the year 1053. Before him none had combated the real presence ; therefore it was the universal sentiment of the Church."

This author does still something more ; for to the proof of the matter he adds that of right ; that is to say, that he means to prove, that if the Church had been of the Protestants' opinion, it would have made so sensible an alteration in Christendom, when it changed its belief upon this article, and fell into the faith of the real pre-

sence, that there is not an individual but would have been sensible of this innovation, seeing the thing could not fail of being so of itself. Nevertheless he is persuaded, that none ever complained upon this account; whence he infers that no change has been made in the doctrine; nay, and that this change is not even possible after the manner we conceive it. This ingenious method affected Monsieur de Turenne; he found in this reasoning an air of truth of too large extent for his knowledge; his doubts were known; and persons of the first quality, and of an exemplary piety, endeavoured to disperse these delusions. They cast their eyes upon Monsieur Claude, who was then at Paris: he would not oppose what they desired of him, because he found himself thereunto engaged by his conscience, and by the respect which he had for the persons who required his assistance. Thus he wrote; and this was the true occasion of that dispute.

Monsieur Claude understood very well that this was but an ill way to make his court for his restoration to the church of Nismes; but he did not stand wavering what course to take. He saw that he was going to enter the lists with a writer of mighty name; he hoped that God would give him the grace to maintain his cause. Messrs. Blondel and Aubertine, whose writings were to be defended, were authors consummated in the study of the Fathers; they seemed to have

exhausted the matter which Monsieur Claude undertook to treat of: if we find that he sometimes walks in their steps, we shall also see that he makes new discoveries; and his manner of handling this subject is so fine, sensible, and strong, that we may affirm it to be a method wholly new, whereof Monsieur Claude is the first author. In short, as he had tried the strength of his genius, he was sensible of an air of confidence, which arose from the strength of the truth he was going to defend: this was his disposition when he began to write upon this matter. His answer is short, but it is the fullest and closest work that had till then been seen upon this subject. The author speaks little, but says a great deal in few words; and the hypotheses which he states are so well meditated, so just, backed with such good reason, that there is no staggering them, whatever onset has been made upon them; nay, and we shall find that all the trains of this great dispute are so many lines that depart from that centre, and which, after divers illustrations and long evasions, return thither as to their true principle.

Monsieur Claude undertakes to prove in his answer, that this change termed a chimera, and looked on as a thing impossible, did actually happen. He shows the time, manner, and principal authors that favoured it; he makes appear how easy it is to alter a point of doctrine when those

three things concur together, as has been seen in that of the eucharist ; first, when it is attacked in an underhand manner, and by way of explication, still retaining the same terms, consecrated by a long use to that tenet ; secondly, when this innovation does not alter any thing in the worship ; and thirdly, when the error finds a happy age wherein to spread its darkness. He proves so well that these three things have concurred in the change of belief, upon the subject of the eucharist, that all his reasons are as so many demonstrations, against which there is no offering any thing that can weaken the proof of them.

The author of the little tract, "Of the Perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholic Church touching the Eucharist," hath acted in this debate as shrewd men do who have nice concerns to defend in the courts of justice ; for though you produce against them a vast number of witnesses, considerable both for their worth and their dignity, they plainly perceive that the only way to ward off the blow that would otherwise destroy them, is to endeavour to invalidate the proof by reproaches, good or bad, which rob these witnesses of all credit ; and thus you have a vast field open to contempt, to foul language, and imposture. Nay, and we have seen such as by a cunning sleight suggested to them by their danger, endeavour to derive advantage from the testimony that has been urged against them, however opposite it

may be to their justification ; and this is much the character of that Popish author. Monsieur Claude understood his design very well ; he traced him exactly through all his windings ; and as it highly behoved him to maintain the dignity, integrity, and authority of the testimonies which Messrs. Blondel and Aubertine had produced, we may affirm, that he did it with all the evidence, and all the strength, that can be desired in a disputation of that nature, which turned much more upon matters of fact, than upon questions of right.

Monsieur Claude, having not been able to get the prohibitions taken off that had been exhibited against his officiating in his pastorship in Nismes, or in any other town of Languedoc, departed from Paris after six months' abode in that town, and repaired to Montauban. Certain it is, that he had not then any settlement in his mind, as seeing no appearance for it ; yet did he live much at his ease. Though he was not altogether unconcerned at the troubles which he was made to suffer, he overcame them by submitting himself with an absolute resignation to the providence of God ; and this course of submission to the decrees of heaven, which is ever the best, did not fail to prosper with him ; he had not the trouble of wishing or of being tired with expectation of seeing his desires accomplished. The church of Montauban prevented him, and gave him not

leisure to solace himself after the hardship of a long journey; for he arrived there on the Saturday, and preached on the Sunday following, being communion-day. The church assembled for his vocation; a place was offered him; he accepted it; and the synod authorized the choice of the church. He had served eight years the church of Nismes, when he settled in that of Montauban, where he stayed but four years; but with so much delight, that I have heard him often say that that time composed the sweetest and happiest period of his life. He there lived in a perfect union with his colleagues, being cherished and esteemed by his church, and being charmed with the beauties of that climate; which he looked upon as his second place of nativity, having there performed his studies.

There did he compose his answer to the "Second Tract of the Perpetuity of the Faith of the Eucharist;" but did not imagine that the manuscript which he had left at Paris would one day become a subject of disputation, because it was only made for the instruction of Monsieur de Turenne, who declared himself to be satisfied with it. Nevertheless this work was three years after taken to task; and the author of "the Perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholic Church touching the Eucharist" made an answer thereunto.

For a long time not any book about religion had been seen in France, that made so much

noise as this. The author attacked not now the ashes of a dead person, that are seldom feared, as he had done in his former tract, which slightly ran over the book of Monsieur Aubertine : he knew that he had to do with another author, who was not to be slighted ; and this inspired him with a design of writing after a more sinewy and elaborate manner. Whether the event proved answerable to his good intentions is a point which I leave the readers to judge of. Monsieur Claude was not of that opinion : and if he found more art in the second tract than in the former, more wit and more care to conceal the weakness of the matter, which the author therein defends, yet did he not therein observe the more solidity. He saw in it somewhat less sincerity, and eruptions of mind against persons of merit and probity, to whom the public has not done the same justice as this author.

To remain mute when the whole kingdom speaks, such silence seemed affected to Monsieur Claude. The Roman Catholics said openly, that this last book made their cause triumph, and that it would not be answered. The Protestants did not speak with so much arrogance, though they had much greater confidence, being necessitated to curb their sentiments, when they were treated with ill language, and to make semblance of fearing books, that did not really perplex them much ; and this piece was of that rank. Mon-

sieur Claude ventured the repose of his life by answering it. The event did but too well justify him ; he nevertheless determined to maintain his first tract, by refuting the book which made so much noise at that time ; and this is the piece bearing the title of "An Answer to the Second Tract of the Perpetuity of the Faith of the Eucharist." This work is much larger than the former, though it turns much upon the same principles. It was necessary to be more particular in citations, in the choice of proofs, in the order and light wherein they were to be set, and the consequences that are to be thence derived ; and this course is perhaps what is most difficult in a disputation of the nature of this under our consideration. Monsieur Claude knew it very well ; and on that account did he contrive a method painful for himself, but easy and useful for his readers. He only took what was most essential in the passages of the Fathers, and which was serviceable to his subject ; he says not too much, for fear of wearying out attention ; he says sufficient to illustrate his matter ; the arguments he brings upon these testimonies are short, but persuasive, whether he backs his own cause, or attacks that of the Church of Rome. And because it is a subject containing ungrateful matter, by reason of the same expressions of the ancients, which are often reiterated in this kind of conflict, Monsieur Claude thought fitting to

enliven his matter with a gaiety of discourse ; yet without deviating from the character of a wise and majestic writer.

The author of the treatise of the eucharist made it matter for his diversion, one while to insult our cause, whose weakness he deplores ; another while our Reformers, whom he speaks of with extreme contempt ; and sometimes Monsieur Claude himself, looking on his demonstrations as petty illusions, which vanish at the approach of his lights. I know not whether he imagined when he meditated his common-place of metaphors, that Monsieur Claude would sleep upon that passage : he was certainly mistaken if he had that opinion. Monsieur Claude found out the weakness of it, makes merry with it in more than one place, as well as at that method of the author, of putting proofs into objections, and objections into proofs. He commends his judicious silence, which makes him pass quickly over the greatest difficulties ; and his prudence, that makes him dwell upon things that seem the most easy. This is what Monsieur Claude calls, in the conduct of the author, an affectation of speaking in a slumber, so to lull us asleep by his own example. There are places, indeed, where he does not seem to be in his wonted good humour ; and this is when he cannot bear what writers of that communion call “ pious frauds ; ” I mean the manifest alterations which the author

makes of some passages, as to the sense, the terms, and expressions : one is in the "Homily of the Eucharist for Consecration," attributed to St. Chrysostom, though it be none of his; the other is taken from Luke Anacorete.

Fame, which delights in magnifying objects, quickly gave the alarm among the Jansenists ; a secret rumour was spread about Paris, that the unknown author was answering this second tract of the eucharist. The main body detached some of its emissaries to find out whence this news came, and in what part of the earth this hardy Minister lived, who came to disturb the glory of such as had the vogue of being the most learned and most polite writers of France. Some of them brought back word, that the author they were in quest of was Monsieur Claude. This was a sufficient intimation to those gentlemen, for them to take their measures ; they wrote to the Bishop of Montauban, a Prelate eminent at that time for his sermons, which the Court had relished, and for the engagements he had with the Jansenists. They entreated him to know whether Monsieur Claude was writing ; to see his papers, if possible ; and to acquaint them with the intent of them. This Prelate sped according to their desires : Monsieur Claude had been obliged to see him ; he was known by him, and, if I dare say it, esteemed,—a thing rare in France, considering that immense distance which

is presumed to be between the height of an Episcopal crosier, and the bare crook of one of our Pastors. My Lord Bishop entreated Monsieur Claude to tell him, whether it was true that he was answering Monsieur Arnaud, for so was the style at that time ; and said that he would do him a very sensible kindness in letting him see his answer. Monsieur Claude, thinking it did not become him to deny a thing which he did not at first think to be of consequence, he promised to let him see some of his copy, and accordingly performed what he promised.

The Bishop of Montauban did not fail to inform his friends of what he had seen, and to let them know that this answer was printing at Paris, under the direction of a person of merit, who did that good office to Monsieur Claude, his particular friend. I know not how far the reflections of that Prelate proceeded. In a short time we saw orders come from the Court, that snatched him away from the church of Montauban. His friends did not doubt that his merit had subjected him to this new disgrace. He obeyed these the King's orders, as he had obeyed those that had taken him from Nismes ; and not finding any safe sanctuary in the provinces, he resolved to go and lay open his conduct to the eyes of the Court, that judges much better by its own lights, than when it was obliged through the great distance of places to trust to the lights of others.

On the same day that he arrived in Paris, he had the dissatisfaction to hear, that a stop was put to the impression of his book : but though this trouble attended him to bed, when he waked again he was complimented with better tidings ; for the very next morning after his arrival, he had notice that the prohibitions relating to his answer had been withdrawn, and that it was allowed the liberty of the press. The Jansenists are said to have endeavoured to put a stop to its sale by their credit, which was considerable ; but the Jesuits, through other principles, very contrary to the former, brought again the course of this concern into its natural channel ; a remarkable example of the vanity of the thoughts of men, and of the depth of the designs of the providence of God, who knows how to derive glory from the good and ill dispositions of their minds. This second answer of Monsieur Claude had all the success he could desire. The Protestants made it the buckler of their cause ; the Roman Catholics found it very dangerous ; and if the Port-Royal found therein matter of vexation, other people, more complying than they, were not much concerned at the consequences. The progress of Monsieur Claude's sentiments in this book extended very far. He rendered the change of belief as to the eucharist too sensible. Every individual that reads his reasons had a sense of this alteration ; and to stop the course of it, they

bethought themselves of giving out that the citations of the passages of the Fathers were not faithful; and as these gentlemen among their people are believed upon their bare word, it was absolutely necessary, for the dispersing this false accusation, that Monsieur Claude should print at full length the passages he had cited; and this is what will be found in the seventh edition, that was made of that answer in the year 1668. The work was large, but this volume might still have been enlarged, by a considerable number of other passages, which I have seen written by the late Monsieur Claude's own hand, which is in the margin of that second answer he left in his closet.

Monsieur Claude stayed near nine months in Paris, being uncertain of his fate, without being able to break through the barriers that hindered his return to Montauban. This was an Episcopal case; and these causes were so privileged, that a person was ever sure of losing the process that he had with those personages. Monsieur Claude understood it so too; and with submission and patience armed himself against all these hardships.

During this interval he was courted by the church of Bourdeaux; but Charenton had people of too much sense to suffer themselves to be robbed of a man of such great merit, who was already among them; and they gave him some

intimation of the design which that church entertained. A regard was to be had to the inclinations of the Court; the matter was prepared; and as soon as they saw a propitious moment for calling Monsieur Claude into the church of Paris, they took him; and he was effectually appointed to serve that flock in the year 1666.

CHAPTER II.

IF Monsieur Claude's books made so much noise in Paris, when he was a hundred leagues distant, it is easy to judge that he was much more talked of when it came to be known that he was to make his constant abode in that town, in order to serve the church that met at Charenton. I know not after what manner the Port-Royal received the news, and whether those gentlemen, seeing that this learned Minister fixed his residence in that great city, did not think of him what skilful politicians say of a Prince that settles himself in Italy, that it was an ill prospect, and an eyesore. Be it as it may, it does not appear that they stirred in the least to traverse this calling: it was not unknown at Court; and this was sufficient for Monsieur Claude.

A discourse there was of an answer of the author of "The Perpetuity of the Faith," to Mon-

sieur Claude's second book. He very quietly expected its coming out : however, it did not appear for some time, which is a mystery I have no design to inquire into, it no ways availing my subject ; and it is sufficient for me to say, that another writer stood forth to supply Monsieur Claude's antagonist's room ; but I am as yet a stranger, whether it was out of kindness to Monsieur Arnaud : great men are not over-fond of such kind of assistance, as being willing to avoid all that can suggest the least suspicion of human weakness. But to what purpose all this ? When people have diligent friends, they prevent us, whether we will or no ; and it is a kind of civility which we should not dare to complain of. This dispute made too much noise, to leave a society at rest that presumes it has a right to decide upon all matters. Its emulation was roused ; and for fear lest any other should gain the victory, it immediately caused one of its champions to enter the lists, to rob Monsieur Arnaud of the crown he already laid hold of, and which he is said only to have lost by being too much a formalist. Father Noüet, a Jesuit, wrote against Monsieur Claude ; and they did not stay for the printer to be at work upon the first leaf. All concurred towards the speedy stopping the progress this second answer made ; and Father Noüet's book was put forth with all expedition, as a happy dam in opposition to this torrent.

This Father Noüet's work has its beauties and its goodness, like those actions of great consequence which at the bar defend an ill cause with a great deal of art; a vast knowledge of antiquity, though little backed by truth; a design of writing gentleman-like, but most commonly unseasonably used; being sometimes traversed by the bare heat of disputation, and for the sake of the cause he defended.

Monsieur Claude might handsomely have forborne answering this book, as being to face Monsieur Arnaud, who only seemed to require time for writing, that he might collect all his forces and overwhelm him with his last stroke: nevertheless he passed over these difficulties; and, making it a point of honour still to maintain this dispute against an able Doctor chosen by the most learned Society of the Church of Rome, he answered Father Noüet's book; and this is the third work of his composing upon this important matter.

This answer was Monsieur Claude's favourite book. He spoke of it modestly in the main, which indeed was his character; but there was nevertheless to be observed in his discourses a fondness for this composition; and I have known deserving persons, that were of the same opinion with him upon this point. The preface to this book is admirable, and affords a most noble idea of the author's design.

Monsieur Claude had occasion in this dispute to follow a tract which Monsieur Arnaud had diverted him from. Father Noüet thought fit to upbraid him in some manner, for having abandoned the holy writ in this controversy: this accusation is curious as falling from a Jesuit's pen. Monsieur Claude did not fail to turn it to his advantage: it gave him occasion to explain to us the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John; it was requisite that satisfaction should be given to a person that complained of a Minister's neglecting the word of God. The tract of the use of the senses is an accomplished piece: nothing has been seen so well meditated upon that matter, as what he says of it; nothing so pat or so happy as the application he makes of it. As for the passages of the Fathers which this author produces against them, he rids himself of them like an able and gallant man; for when Father Noüet produces very improperly against him authors posterior to Pascatius, he chooses them out in the eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. Monsieur Claude does not fail to tell him, that these are improper pieces, and witnesses that bear their recusation in their forehead; but he does nevertheless often examine his passages, wherein he finds a sense quite opposite to Father Noüet's designs. The opinions of the Greeks touching the eucharist is likewise brought into play.

Monsieur Claude answers it, and upon that point acquaints him with more than one history which he knew not, or which he was minded to dissemble, because it did not favour his cause. This author is not always happy in his citations, as not being willing to take the pains of going to the fountain-head. Claude complains of his neglects. Father Noüet is hardy, and makes no scruple of often altering passages. Monsieur Claude has much to do to be moderate upon this point; he exclaims sufficiently, so as that the reader may be advertised of the snare that is laid for him. Never did author know how to avail himself better of the advantages that are offered him. If Father Noüet speaks of reading of the Fathers, as of a vast forest, our author draws thence an argument, that the Christian faith is less involved in holy writ than in tradition, which is a woody country, by a Jesuit's own confession. When this writer is angry at the primitive ages of the church, to which Monsieur Claude would bring him back, he says, "They have given us more martyrs than writers and doctors;" our author derives an advantage from his ill humour, and shows the reason why the Church of Rome refuses this testimony. If Monsieur Claude sets Monsieur Arnaud against Father Noüet, it is without any design of setting them at odds, with regard to the silence of the Pagans concerning transubstantiation, and the adora-

tion of the eucharist. Monsieur Arnaud denies that any proof can be drawn from their silence; and adds, that they have perhaps written books upon this subject, that have not been transmitted to us. Father Noüet, on the contrary, maintains that Monsieur Claude's consequence would be just, if the Pagans had not upbraided the Christians with the difficulties of that mystery; but he fancies that he proves it clearer than the day; and this is another point which our author does not agree with him in, refuting very plainly the passages urged by Father Noüet, and maintaining his first thesis: in short, though Father Noüet had not perhaps a set design, here to combat Monsieur Claude's opinion as to the time of the change that was made in point of the eucharist, he could not with honour forbear saying something of it towards the end of his book. Forced he was to bear this little torture, in favour of the devoutest zealots of his communion, who would have thought all had been lost if he had failed of maintaining a circumstance which so far influences the goodness of that cause; but as he gives this matter only a transitory touch, Monsieur Claude does not enlarge upon this subject, but nevertheless says sufficient to refute Father Noüet's illusions, and to back the good reasons he alleged in the two former writings.

This Monsieur Claude's answer was kindly

received. The Protestants found therein the confirmation of their faith; the Jansenists were not sorry that Father Noüet had made this diversion in favour of them, being so much time gained to take breath; and the Jesuits, on whom all people had their eyes fixed, came off rather angrily from this affair. They talked of Father Noüet as of one of their adventurers, that had pushed hard at his enemy, and come off from the conflict honoured with some wounds. This disputation had no ill consequence. The advocate of the Protestant party was treated more handsomely by the Society of the Jesuits, which commonly are not of a humour to suffer much, than he had been by the Jansenist cabal of Port-Royal.

After this attack, a kind of suspension of arms lasted for some time. Monsieur Claude wanted not employment: the bare business of his pulpit at Charenton required the whole application of an ordinary Minister. This church was so celebrated of itself, and honoured with the presence of so many foreigners, that it had been imprudence in a Minister to preach unprepared. Thus the bare office of preaching was a work of pains sufficient for Monsieur Claude, who was desirous to edify his flock, answer the hopes that people conceived of him, and follow the steps of his eminent colleagues. He printed but few sermons, as being taken up with other matters

which more concerned the public. We may nevertheless judge by those which he has published that his talent lay no less in preaching than in writing ; and I hope his son will print a small tract which his father composed of the manner of explaining holy writ in the pulpit, so just and so fine, that, upon reading it, people will be thoroughly persuaded that Monsieur Claude was a great master in that matter.

Monsieur Claude did not only signalize himself by his writings. He was in a station, that had great influences to shed over the other Reformed churches of France. Paris was the fountain whence proceeded all the mischiefs that overwhelmed the Protestants in the provinces, and Charenton the place whither they repaired for counsel. Monsieur Claude considered this : he acted, he roused up others by his own example. Though he could not wholly remedy the mischiefs of so many that were afflicted, and who from far and near required his assistance, we may say that he mitigated their trouble, by partaking therein himself, and by his consolations. Monsieur Arnaud's book came out at length, being entitled "The Perpetuity of the Faith of the Catholic Church, touching the Eucharist, defended." Monsieur Claude thought himself bound to answer it. This work of Monsieur Arnaud made a noise in the world, it having certain characters fit to excite the admiration of

people who only floridly touch upon matters, to acquire quickly and easily the quality of learned. Monsieur Arnaud handles a subject that might pass in some manner for new at Paris, because no French writer had yet been seen that had collected so many testimonies, and that like him had so profoundly argued about the religion of the Greeks. This air of novelty much set off his book. He cited passages which seemed to bear all the marks of the real presence, according to the Roman mode. A prodigious reading was observed in his answer. This great work inspired happy prepossessions in favour of the author. In short, though Monsieur Arnaud had in his other works spoken with a majestic tone, yet he now raised his voice much higher; he looked so big when he spoke of Monsieur Claude, and handled his books with so much arrogance, that it was a kind of torrent which without examination hurried away the suffrages of those easy judges that are determined by the bare tone of the voice.

Monsieur Claude had not the same assistance as Monsieur Arnaud, the latter being said to have had friends, and such as furnished him with proofs. Monsieur Claude could have wished that the same thing had been done for him; but this required a happy leisure,—a privilege which was out of date at Charenton, and granted only to the Ecclesiastics of France. In default of his

friends, he was forced to make it out in his own person. I should not dare to insert the number of volumes he read ; what is seen of them in his answer is but the least part of them. We often read several books in hopes of finding something that may be serviceable to the subject we have in our mind, and we find nothing less than what we are in quest of. Nevertheless a writer cannot dispense himself from this fruitless labour, when he is engaged in a disputation of the nature of this, which turns upon matters that are to be defended or opposed.

Monsieur Claude states principles that are a mighty help to disperse all the illusions of Monsieur Arnaud. He shows that the business in this dispute is not to know exactly what the Greeks believed in the matter of the eucharist, but what they do not believe ; and it is in this rank that he places the transubstantiation of the Church of Rome, and the sovereign adoration which the Latins pay the eucharist. He draws up a platform of the Greek Church, which is as it were the key of that matter ; for he shows that there are several Greek churches that entertain communion with the Church of Rome ; and that it is not among them that we are to go to seek for truth : he also proves, that there are many seminaries in Greece and in the east where youth are brought up in the faith of the Church of Rome ; and that thence are taken Priests, Bi-

shops, and sometimes Patriarchs, who are Latins in faith, and Greeks only in ceremonies. Money, fear, and other motives, often bring those Roman Doctors dressed up after the Greek mode, to the principal pulpits of those wretched provinces, where heavy ignorance obtains; after which it is no difficult matter to obtain such testimonies as one pleases from those missionaries who owe the Pope all they have, and who require nothing more as an acknowledgment of his favours, than paper and ink. These are points which Monsieur Claude makes evidently plain, from the testimony of several writers most worthy of credit. In short, Monsieur Claude makes out the opinion of the true Greek Church, which is engaged neither by love nor fear with the Church of Rome, and speaks clearly of the faith concerning the eucharist; wherein you neither find the Roman transubstantiation nor adoration. With these maxims Monsieur Claude refutes all Monsieur Arnaud's arguments; he unravels the intrigue of the testimonies he produces; he puts his readers in a way of doing the like with himself; and there is no using any evasion but what this excellent matter provides against. For it serves to answer all that Monsieur Arnaud has said upon this subject, and shows you what course to take for the illustrating all the objections that might be made henceforward upon this matter. This was Monsieur Claude's fourth answer upon

this dispute. The public did him justice in this, as it had done him in the other. It visibly appeared that his adversary granted him the principal question, which was the belief of the Latin Church, in the matter of the eucharist till the time of Pascatius. Monsieur Claude had strongly proved, that till then the real presence, transubstantiation, and the adoration of the host were unknown doctrines to the Latin Church. Monsieur Arnaud thought fitting to dispute no longer upon this point ; and, to give the change, he contrived to lead Monsieur Claude and the reader into the east. Monsieur Claude could willingly have been without this walk ; but having undertaken to cure a person of his errors, he was to be followed every where, that so he might dissipate his illusions ; after which Monsieur Claude, having all to no purpose exhausted all the secrets of his art, thought it became him to abandon this cure, and to leave it wholly to the grace of God. .

I have been longer than I thought upon this dispute of Monsieur Claude and Monsieur Arnaud ; but as it is what made most noise, I thought it requisite to give an exact idea of it, that it might make an impression upon the reader's mind. I shall be shorter in his other works, and shall thereby endeavour a little to recreate such people's minds as were tired by the uniformity of this matter, and who love novelty and conclusion.

The desire of being an author is an uneasy passion. Since Monsieur Arnaud did not come again into play, another writer did not tarry long before he supplied his room. He wrote against our Reformation in a very bitter style; he attacked Monsieur Claude; he pointed him out by his name. This book is entitled "Legitimate Prepossessions against the Calvinists:" it is no longer a matter of doctrine that is undertaken to be handled; the success of the dispute of the eucharist had not been happy for the Port-Royal; another course was to be taken; and we to be attacked in a place proper for declamations, for calumny and the contempt of our religion. The author of these "Prepossessions" could not have chosen better. He there found wherewithal to satisfy his spleen against our Reformers, whom he loads with opprobrious language. This was a large field to excite the people's hatred against us, by renewing, without any necessity, those sad ideas of our ancient quarrels, which charity ought to have buried in an eternal forgetfulness. This crafty policy, which those gentlemen make profession of uniting with morals plain and free from all worldly interests, found here a fair occasion of displaying their maxims at Court, where people were not over well satisfied with some of their works. The point of favour was to be weathered again, by speaking of us and our religion after so odious a manner, as

that it might make impression upon the most moderate minds; and through this prospect did Monsieur Nicole write that work; and that is its true character.

Monsieur Claude answered it; but he was far from following that author's violent method. He found it so contrary to the spirit of Christianity, that he contented himself with showing its poisonous passages; but he does not make them rebound upon his adversary's head, thinking it sufficient that he renders them of no use, and destroys them before his eyes: and for aught I know, this is a greater mortification for that author, than if he had engaged him after a less civil manner.

Monsieur Claude gives us the portrait of the Latin Church before the Reformation. There is not one sole stroke in it of his own hand; for he makes use only of the testimonies of Roman Catholic authors. This caution was necessary on the account of the niceness of the subject, and to avoid the suspicion of falsehood. The idea he gives us of the Church at that time is so sad, that there is no need of opening one's eyes, to judge that it wanted reformation. Monsieur Claude proves that it was desired, that it was eagerly demanded, before our Reformers set about it; but he likewise shows the evasions which the Court of Rome used to elude this proposition, and the little likelihood there was

of the Clergy's entering upon so holy a project. After having showed the necessity of the Reformation, Monsieur Claude proves that our Reformers might go to work upon weeding the field of the Lord; and that they were forced thereunto by their own interest, and by the engagement they were under of furthering the salvation of their brethren. He answers those petty objections of the Missionaries, which the author of the "Prepossession" pompously displays: he shows that there is no arguing directly against a doctrine, or in its behalf, by the bare examination of the lives of those who teach it; that the consequence is much more natural, and more sure to pronounce for or against a religion, after having examined its belief. He explains some of Luther's expressions that seem too rude: he speaks of that author as a hero, because he really exerted an heroic constancy; but he will not warrant all his frailties: he is satisfied with showing that the greatest men are subject to failings; and by this means does he shelter some of our Reformers, over whose lives the author of the "Prepossession" was minded to vent his spleen. The distinction of this author is curious. He says that there may be in the Church a negative separation, that only consists in abstaining from the practice of doctrines that we do not believe. He is of a temporizing humour; insinuating that it would not have been ill contrived in our fathers, had

they only proceeded so far ; but he cannot pardon them the positive separation, which is properly what is called set apart. It appears plainly that this author's maxims do not pass for standard truth at this day, when there would be so fair an occasion to put them in practice. Many unhappy persons are there, who would thank this author if he could procure them the enjoyment of that negative separation whereof he speaks, till such time as we find the results which nature, reason, and faith presuppose. But perhaps the things would go too far, if so great a complaisance was had for this negative ; for there is found much less danger in seeing the mysteries profaned, than in giving the least suspicion, that the number of the true converts was not very great. This author makes a mock of us with his distinction ; for besides that, a good conscience with this worldly management in matter of religion, the little support there is at this day from the Roman Church for those that do not relish its tenets, and the racks which on this account it puts on their minds and their hearts, induce us to believe, that the same maxims would have been practised upon our fathers at the time of the Reformation, and that they would not have spared the negative separation.

Our authors would have written upon this matter ; for the Church of Rome has never ceased exclaiming, that the calling of our Pastors was

not legitimate ; and all that has followed that ill principle could not have any character of justice and goodness. The libraries are full of books that have been written by Doctors of both parties ; but this Monsieur Claude's work is the best that has been seen upon this subject. Possibly time, having given occasion to new objections, has likewise furnished Monsieur Claude with the occasion of making new discoveries in this matter ; but what is particular, and a result of the beauty of his genius, is, that he writes with so much clearness, states his principles so well, and with so much exactness makes the application of them to the ministry of the Protestants, that we are immediately sensible of the necessity of their consequences. Thus, for example, when they debate with him the calling of the first Reformers ; he contents himself with proving, that ministry is to the church even in opposition to the Pastors ; that it is a right that cannot be alienated, either by the consent of the parties, or by the strongest law, that is to say, by usurpation : he adds, that three wills must concur to the forming of a lawful calling, that of God, that of the church, and the consent of him to whom the ministry is directed : he declares that the ministry that is exercised among Protestants is not an upstart ministry, because it does not preach up a new Gospel, but the same which the Apostles settled in the church, yet purged from the errors which

ignorance had shed therein. With these maxims does Monsieur Claude assert our calling, against all the unjust reproaches of the Church of Rome. He clearly shows its justice and necessity. This book having these great characters, it is no wonder that the public with joy received it, and that it did so much honour to its author.

Monsieur Claude did in 1676 cause five sermons to be printed, which he had preached at Charenton the year before, upon Matt. xxii. 1—3; and the title of these sermons is, “The Parable of the Wedding Feast.”

I should be afraid of doing him an injury, if I entered upon the particulars of these sermons: they are too fine and too short for an extract of them to be given in this place, as containing the matter of a vast volume; and, if well scanned, will afford the profit of a bulky piece, which few readers run over otherwise than in haste. Whereas these sermons entertain people of sound judgment; they contain a mighty stock of divinity, morals worthy of the subject he explains, a neatness of expression, so just a way of arguing, with that heat and vivacity, that they must own the author no less fit for the pulpit than the study.

Monsieur Claude had but one son, whom he tenderly loved. He was very glad to see that his inclinations led him towards the ministry; and that this choice he made, and which ought

to be so free, had answered the inclinations of his heart. He had this satisfaction, to find in him a subject proper to avail himself of his parts and example. He studied in the academies of France, under the best masters, who took great care of him; he returned to his father, who accomplished him in all things that might make him a perfect Preacher. After which he was examined at Sedan, in September, 1678, and judged very worthy of being received into the office of the holy ministry. He was demanded by the church of Clermont, fourteen leagues from Paris, in a Synod of the Isle of France; and his father had the comfort of ordaining him, Oct. 9th, 1678.

Monsieur Claude more especially excelled at the head of a company: such did he appear for several years together in the Consistory of Charenton; such has he been seen in more than one Synod of the Isle of France, wherein he was Moderator. One instance more especially there was, wherein he gave an instance of the strength of his genius, which surprised the whole assembly. For after that eight proponents had explained the text he had given them, the company, being taken up with more important concerns, deferred the examination of those propositions till the next day. This was a troublesome disappointment to the Moderator, who was to make report of those actions to the Synod; but Monsieur

Claude was not perplexed at this accident. The day following he called to mind all his ideas, put each in its due place, forgot not so much as one single circumstance ; and after he had performed the function of a reporter, he performed that of a judge ; he examined those eight propositions, and spoke his opinion of them like a master : though the assembly knew his abilities, yet was it charmed with his memory, knowledge, and judgment. In case, in the Synod, any matters were proposed that were intricate of themselves, and still more perplexing through the cloud which the ignorance or devices of the party did occasion, Monsieur Claude's wit had such an excellency, that in a moment it made way through all this chaos, formed a proposition clear and precise, in order to his speaking his opinion readily, as if opinions were to turn upon a yea or a no ; a character that is never mistaken, in the judging of a man that presides in a company, since the choice of matters, and the making of them plain, are a certain sign of the strength of a great genius. But as Monsieur Claude was exact in retaining the purity of the faith, in the tenets of the Reformed religion, which he has so well defended, we may likewise say, that he acted like a wise and charitable man in regard of the various sentiments which the Protestants entertain upon the subject of ecclesiastical government and discipline, and upon the use of some ceremonies.

His conduct more especially appeared, in an answer he made to a letter of the Bishop of London. This Prelate, illustrious by his birth, and who with so much honour maintained the dignity of that great office, laboured under apprehensions for the divisions with which the Church of England was threatened, upon occasion of the Episcopal government. For the preventing of this mischief, he wrote to some of the most eminent French Ministers, that he might have their advice. Monsieur Claude made too much noise in France, not to be consulted in an affair of this moment. He received a letter from that Prelate. This was a slippery step : he had the eyes of all the Protestants upon him, to see how he would behave himself in so nice a concern. He came off from it with honour : he used a temperament that was approved of by all rational persons ; he owned what is good in the Episcopacy, but he does not dissemble the feebleness of some Prelates, who seem to him too rigid over our calling. We do not see in his letter that decisive magisterial air which other writers take upon them : it is full of that humble spirit of Christianity, which only breathes charity and peace. This character pleased the Bishop of London, who honoured him with his esteem. Monsieur Claude, in return, was full of acknowledgments ; speaking of that famous Prelate as of one of the greatest ornaments of the Church of England, and point-

ing him out under the name of the "charitable father of all those unhappy persons that have taken refuge, who are all comforted in that they can pour forth their sighs into a bosom ever open to the complaints and necessities of the miserable." This letter was written in the year 1680.

In 1683 came forth Monsieur Claude's answer to Monsieur de Meaux's book, entitled "A Conference with Monsieur Claude, Minister of Charonton;" and the occasion which obliged him to put it forth was as followeth. Monsieur Claude had a conference with the Bishop of Condom, upon the account of Mademoiselle de Duras, at the Countess de Roye's house, on the 1st of March, 1678. Some small time after, that Prelate suffered a relation of their conference to go abroad out of his cabinet, with a discourse he had made for Mademoiselle de Duras upon the matter of the Church. Monsieur Claude, in his turn, gave one of his friends another relation of that conference, with animadversions upon Monsieur de Condom's discourse; his manuscript fell into that Prelate's hands, who entreated a worthy person to know of Monsieur Claude, whether he approved of that writing which went abroad under his name. Monsieur Claude perused it, to see whether it was conformable to the original; and having found it exact, he wrote at the bottom that he owned it for his. This declaration

was given to Monsieur de Condom, who made reflections upon Monsieur Claude's animadversions, for the maintaining his discourse of the Church ; he likewise made some upon their conference ; and this was the subject of the book he caused to be printed, having for its title, "A Conference with Monsieur Claude, Minister of Charenton."

Monsieur Claude fancied he might on this occasion follow that Prelate's example ; wherefore he caused his book to be printed, wherein he shows three things : he gives us his answer to Monsieur de Condom's discourse, and therein does he handle the question of the Church ; he answers the reflections that Prelate had made upon his tract ; he gives therein a relation of what passed in that conference, and examines the reflections of that Prelate, and owns that he gave his cause all the liveliest colours which the most able Divines of the Church of Rome use, when they would cover an error with the lustre of truth. They parted with marks of a mutual esteem, and with a design not to publish their conversation ; but other considerations prevailed over Monsieur de Condom's mind, and we are obliged to him for having first leaped the bounds they had prescribed to themselves : for it gave Monsieur Claude occasion to handle the matter of the Church, and to give us a most clear and exact idea of it. This composition was his

favourite ; and I may affirm, that he was as much satisfied with it, as with any of those that were the offspring of his pen. He spoke of it to us, just before his last sickness ; he told us he had meditated this question of the Church, with all the application he was capable of, for the giving of it a good light ; he found few authors that had applied themselves as became them in illustrating that matter : he added, that Messrs. Cameron and Mestrezat were those that had best explained it ; and that by keeping to the maxims he had stated, one might easily answer all the objections of the Doctors of the Church of Rome, without fearing they should stagger his hypotheses.

At first this conference only turned upon points of discipline, and upon some small difficulties, touching the submission which individuals ought to have for the decrees of ecclesiastical companies. If this discourse had not been the result of a common conversation, wherein chance has a greater part than the choice of matters, in all likelihood one might have said that these questions were not worthy of taking up those two great geniuses ; but the consequences have so exalted this subject, that it is the same thing with this dispute, trivial in its beginning, as it is with those small springs which make no noise at their issuing out of the earth, and which are to be passed dry-footed, but which increase extremely in a long course, often divide the place

they water, redound to the utility of commerce, and thereby occasion puzzling work to the learned, who eagerly dispute about the sundry names that have been given to these waters, of their invisibility, when the rivers they form hide themselves in the earth, of their privileges, and of the rights the people have thereto.

The condition of the Protestants was such, that the repose of their lives might with impunity have been interrupted by the peevishness of a bare Vicar, as soon as he might have entertained the desire of wearying out a person of our religion ; but it was more especially a capital crime in a Minister to attack the sentiments of a Prelate.

Monsieur Claude had more than once experienced, even in better times, how far the power of these gentlemen extended in this case ; yet did he not fail, as much as in him lay, of crossing the design of the Clergy of France, in writing against the Circular Letters that came from that assembly, which were spread abroad under the authority of its name. He imagined that he owed the sacrifice he made them of his rest to his own conscience, and to the salvation of his brethren ; for things were then in such a posture, that the bare thought of maintaining our cause was, in the opinion of those gentlemen, deemed a kind of felony, as Monsieur Claude has publicly shown, when he explains the result of that

expression, "Whatever you may say or write, it is all in vain:" these are the terms of their letter.

Monsieur Claude does not put his name to that little book entitled "Considerations upon the Circular Letters of the Assembly of the Clergy of France, of the year 1682," because this piece had other characters enough of its author; and that Christian prudence does not oblige us to expose ourselves, when there is no motive of conscience that calls us thereunto. Possibly Monsieur Claude never composed any work that has done him more honour than this, as small as it is: he does not deviate from the terms of a profound respect, when he reflects upon the temporal grandeur of those he speaks of, and to whom he thinks this submission owing. But after this, he takes upon him a true air of greatness, proceeding from the majesty of the matter he handles; insomuch, that we see him march as an equal with those against whom he disputes, upbraiding them with their affected mildness, undermining the foundations of an absolute authority which they exercise over souls, and declaring to them roundly, that he only took pen in hand to give a reason of his faith, not that he does herein own them for his masters, but to render the sentiments of the Protestants public; and the reason he alleges for it is, that religion and conscience only depend immediately on God.

Some time after these Circular Letters of the

Clergy of France were notified in a somewhat extraordinary manner through all the Protestant churches in the kingdom. The Intendants of the provinces had order to convene the Consistories for the reading of them ; they had commonly, among others, the Prelate's great Vicar, in whose Diocese the commission was performed. As this was a case wholly new, and whose influences created apprehensions, our churches waited to see what the conduct of Charenton would be in this matter, that so they might direct their own course by its compass. This course sped according to their desire ; those of the Consistory of Charenton were the first that were spoken to : Monsieur Claude was chosen to answer ; he did it with great prudence and steadiness, and his answer served for a model to most of the other churches, who were very glad to walk in the steps of so able a guide. This answer was printed : it is conceived in few words, but full of sense. Monsieur Claude owns the august character with which Monsieur the Intendant was invested, and for which he declares that he and his church have a profound respect ; he therein protests that it was from this only fountain of submission that proceeded the application they had used, in the reading of a piece, that had otherwise nothing but what was afflicting for our churches : he farther owns, the mighty station which my Lords the Prelates stand possessed of in the king-

dom, by the dignity of their office, and that they thereby challenge our respects; but that if they pretended to speak to us in those letters, as from an ecclesiastical tribunal, he was bound in conscience to declare to them, that on that side we do not at all acknowledge their authority.

Matters in religion had their mode in France like other things. Monsieur Claude's dispute against Monsieur Arnaud occasioned the sentiments of grace to be little talked of. The two parties wrote as if they had only differed upon the single article of the real presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. This battery had no sooner ceased than they erected that of the authority of the Church; and this seems to be what made the most noise, and on which they most insisted, as seeming to those gentlemen of a more efficacious use for conversion than all the rest together. During these mighty disputes, there was another kind of calmer writers, who made Christian morals their business, and who ever and anon gave the public little pieces which it greedily received, as finding therein wherewithal to recreate itself, from that great application which was necessary to be had for the more lofty questions of divinity.

Monsieur Claude, knowing that a man of his profession ought to do all things for all, in order to the salvation of souls, took the resolution of writing upon a subject of morality, and com-

posed a little book, whose title is "The Examination of One's self, for the being duly prepared for the Communion." (1 Cor. xi. 28.) This is a tract, wherein man sees himself such as he is, in a faithful mirror. Monsieur Claude herein makes appear that he thoroughly knew the heart of man: no weakness is there, but he has penetrated it. He follows him in all the windings he uses, to conceal himself from God, the world, and himself; he takes off that mask, shows his nakedness, his misery, and conducts him to our Lord Jesus Christ, as to his sovereign good. In the Gospel does he take the lessons which ought to serve to illustrate and inflame him; he turns all these instructions to the use of the holy supper. Monsieur Claude farther shows, that he perfectly knew the world, as an able Physician knows poisons; that is to say, with no other design but to oppose their qualities. These are no outrageous morals, like many others: they are just, yet have their severities, but withal they are ever conformable to the state of man upon earth, and to his duty; and this is what renders them sensible to all the world. Whereas there are those that often vend precepts of morality so above our reach, that they make no impression upon our hearts, because our hearts do not find in those portraits one single character that suits with them. This little book met with a very gracious reception from all sorts of persons; and

indeed it must needs have a most extraordinary privilege of goodness, since it carries in its front a licence of a famous Magistrate of Paris, of November 7th, 1681.

Monsieur Claude's writings made so much noise in foreign countries, and especially amongst Protestants, that Groningen caused a Professor's place in divinity to be offered him in its illustrious University; and this town, which had so highly signalized itself in those late wars, being still covered, if I might dare to say it, with the sweat and blood of its enemies, imagined that for the fulness of its glory it ought to get this buckler of the Reformation into its bosom, there to cause sciences and religion to flourish. This calling was directed to Monsieur Claude in all the forms, and with all the inducements he could desire; but it was a difficult matter in this case, to surprise the vigilance and affection of his church, which too well knew the need it had of its Pastor. It earnestly entreated him not to abandon it, at a time especially when his presence was so necessary to all the Protestants of the kingdom; he was willing to make it the sacrifice of his temporal interest and repose; after which he most humbly thanked the Magistrates of Groningen for the honour they had done him, and prepared himself to undergo the utmost fury of that tempest which had so long been lowering over our heads.

In the meanwhile, the calamities of the Protestants daily hastened on apace. The church that met at Charenton saw the storm coming; and the privilege of being enlightened by the eyes of the Court, which it had made its support for above an age, was no longer a means to justify its conduct: it was wholly taken up in warding off the blows made at it by its enemies; it was watchful for the other flocks; and the greatest weight of this heavy burden lay upon Monsieur Claude. He showed himself indefatigable; he answered the writers of the Roman communion, who ever seemed to single out him in their works; he preached as often as any one of his colleagues; and out of a providential spirit extended his thoughts and cares over the saddest futurity.

This was the true state of Monsieur Claude's heart and mind till that fatal day when he perceived that all the solitudes of human prudence were absolutely unavailable, and that he must of necessity see the dispersion of all the reformed churches in France, by the bare revocation of the edict of Nantz, under whose faith we and our fathers had lived.

This edict was published under the seal, on Thursday, Dec. 18th, 1685. The gentlemen of the Consistory had notice of it: they thereby apprehended, that they had no longer the liberty of preaching, because the exercise at Charenton was no longer performed but by virtue of a de-

cree of the council, which was revoked by the bare publication that had been newly made; nevertheless it was not perceived, that the Ecclesiastics made any step to rob them of that small consolation, which they seemed to have left, of having the liberty of meeting once again in their temple. This favour, which would not have been considerable in reality, seemed too great to the Ministers, and to some of the Elders, that they opened their eyes to know the motives of it; and after a pretty exact application, they perceived it to be one of those presents which were to be distrusted, as coming from a suspected hand: they nevertheless lived in a kind of uncertainty, till Saturday at ten o'clock in the morning; the Ministers appointed to preach were ready, when they were fully informed of the design that was laid, of coming into the assembly to speak to the people during or after the action. The most prudent understood the consequences of that day. Monsieur Claude especially, knowing by long experience how far the zeal of religion hurries those that are strongly possessed with it, was the first that deemed it fitting not to preach. He backed his opinion with several reasons, which brought the rest to be of his mind. It was expedient to hinder the people from repairing to Charenton. He saw plainer than the rest the peril he exposed himself to; but he imagined that he was likewise thereunto called by the duty of his office. A good

soul ought not be much concerned for the dangerous consequences of a good counsel. He gave all the necessary orders; the thing succeeded according to his project; there was no preaching at Charenton; and the event proved that his foresight was well grounded, that his fears were just, and that this turn he gave to the rudder of a great ship that was going to be wrecked proceeded from the head of a most able pilot, who contrived to save the people whom God had committed to his charge, when he could no longer hinder the wreck of his vessel.

This cessation of exercise, which had seemed too hasty to some, passed for a masterly stroke in the opinion of others. The Ecclesiastics knew it immediately to be Monsieur Claude that had broken their measures; and to prevent the over-officious cares he might have rendered to his dispersed flock, they would, said they, spare him the pains of that sad spectacle. He had fifteen days' time given him, as well as the other Ministers, to depart the kingdom. They found means to abridge that time; for on Monday, Dec. 22d, 1685, which was the day on which the revocative edict of that of Nantz was registered in the Parliament of Paris, Monsieur Claude received an order at ten o'clock in the morning to be gone within four-and-twenty hours. He obeyed with a profound respect, and went away attended by one of the King's footmen, who was to conduct

him to the frontiers of France ; and who faithfully performed his commission ; and yet nevertheless carried himself very handsomely towards Monsieur Claude : so true it is, that great merit has an ascendant over those very hearts that do not love our religion.

The following brief notices, extracted from Robinson's "Memoirs of the Reformation in France," prefixed to his translation of Saurin's sermons, will serve more fully to illustrate this part of Monsieur Claude's history.

The edict of Nantz, to which reference has just been made, was passed in the year 1598, and secured to the French Protestants the full exercise of their religion. This important enactment, which had often been violated, was revoked, Oct. 22d, 1685, by Louis the Fourteenth, by whom the most horrible persecutions were inflicted upon his Protestant subjects.

"A thousand blows," says Saurin, "were struck at our afflicted churches, before that which destroyed them: for our enemies, if I may use such an expression, not content with seeing our ruin, endeavoured to taste it. One while edicts were published against those who, foreseeing the calamities that threatened our churches, and not having power to prevent them, desired only the sad consolation of not being spectators of their ruin ; [Aug., 1669 ;] another while, against those who through their weakness had denied

their religion, and who, not being able to bear the remorse of their consciences, desired to return to their first profession. [May, 1679.] One while our Pastors were forbidden to exercise their discipline on those of their flocks who had abjured the truth. [June, 1680.] Another while, children of seven years of age were allowed to embrace doctrines which the Church of Rome says are not level to the capacities of adults. [June, 1681.] Now a college was suppressed, and then a church shut up. [Jan., 1683.] Sometimes we were forbidden to convert infidels ; and sometimes to confirm those in the truth whom we had instructed from their infancy ; and our Pastors were forbidden to exercise their pastoral office any longer in one place than three years. [July, 1685.] Sometimes the printing of our books was prohibited ; and sometimes those which we had printed were taken away. [Sept., 1685.] One while we were not suffered to preach in a church ; and another while we were punished for preaching on its ruins ; and at length we were forbidden to worship God in public at all. [Oct., 1685.] Now we were banished ; then we were forbidden to quit the kingdom on pain of death. [1689.] Here we saw the glorious rewards of those who betrayed their religion ; and there we beheld those who had the courage to confess it, a haling to a dungeon, a scaffold, or a galley. Here we saw our persecutors drawing on a

sledge the dead bodies of those who had expired on the rack. There we beheld a false Friar tormenting a dying man, who was terrified, on the one hand, with the fear of hell, if he should apostatize; and, on the other, with the fear of leaving his children without bread, if he should continue in the faith. Yonder they were tearing children from their parents; while the tender parents were shedding more tears for the loss of their souls, than for that of their bodies or lives."

It is impossible to meet with parallel instances of cruelty among the Heathens in their persecutions of the primitive Christians. The bloody butchers, who were sent to them under the name of dragoons, invented a thousand torments to tire their patience, and to force an abjuration from them. "They cast some," says Claude, "into large fires, and took them out when they were half-roasted. They hanged others with large ropes under their armpits, and plunged them several times into wells, till they promised to renounce their religion; they tied them like criminals to the rack, and poured wine with a funnel into their mouths, till, being intoxicated, they declared that they consented to turn Catholics. Some they slashed and cut with penknives; some they took by the nose with red-hot tongs, and led them up and down the rooms till they promised to turn Catholics. These most iniqui-

tous and cruel proceedings made eight hundred thousand persons quit the kingdom."

The Protestant refugees charge their banishment on the Clergy of France; and they give very good proof of their assertion. Nor do they mistake when they affirm that their sufferings are a part of the religion of Rome; for Pope Innocent the Eleventh highly approved of this persecution. He wrote a brief to the King, in which he assured him that what he had done against the heretics of his kingdom would be immortalized by the eulogies of the Catholic Church. He delivered a discourse in the Consistory, in which he said, "The most Christian King's zeal and PIETY did wonderfully appear in extirpating heresy, and in clearing his whole kingdom of it in a very few months." He ordered *Te Deum* to be sung, to give thanks to God for this return of the heretics into the pale of the Church; which was accordingly done with great pomp.

Protestant powers opened their arms to these venerable exiles. Abbadie, Ancillon, and others, fled to Berlin. Basnage, Claude, Du Bosc, and many more, found refuge in Holland. The famous Dr. Allix, with numbers of his brethren, came to England. Many families went to Geneva.

CHAPTER III.

MONSIEUR CLAUDE was not at a loss what foreign country to choose for his retreat ; his son being Minister of the Walloon church at the Hague, biassed him above all other prospects that offered themselves to his mind. At Paris he took coach for Brussels : his fame leading the way, occasioned several persons to visit him in his journey. He passed through Cambray, where he slept, and was there presented with what was in season by the Jesuits. The Father Rector did him the honour to come and see him ; he made due returns to his civility ; and the diversity of religion did not interrupt that commerce of compliments, and instances of a mutual esteem. At last he arrived at the Hague : and the satisfaction he had to be in the bosom of his family, whom the affairs of the time had separated, made him, for some moments, forget the peril he had been in, and the remains of a great fit of sickness.

In a few days after, he had the honour to pay his respects to His Highness the Prince of Orange. He found that his merit had spoken in his behalf ; he met with a gracious reception ; and however great the idea was which Monsieur Claude had conceived of His Highness, he owned that fame, which commonly increases objects, and which had spoken with so much lustre of his life,

had not as yet had voice sufficient to trumpet all the heroic virtues of that august Prince.

Monsieur Claude knew Her Royal Highness the Princess of Orange to be a great and illustrious support of religion ; that she understood it in its source ; and that a lively impression of it was seen in her actions. He was desirous likewise to kiss her hand. He had that honour, and confessed that he had never seen so enlightened an understanding, with so much piety and majesty, united together.

Monsieur Claude likewise paid his respects to persons of a very considerable figure in that State ; and he could not sufficiently admire the sweetness and goodness of those illustrious heads, who at the coming out of their assemblies, where they have appeared invested with the majesty of a sovereign State, speak and act a moment after with other men like private persons, and as if they were their fellow-citizens.

Monsieur Claude was no sooner arrived at the Hague than the Elector of Brandenburg did him the honour to think of him, in order to get him into his territories. This great Prince, whose bare name will be a perfect encomium throughout all ages, caused an honourable and useful employment in his profession to be offered him ; but particular reasons hindered him from complying, so as he could have wished, to this calling. The rest of his days were destined by

the providence of God to these happy provinces, and this potent State was willing that he should share in that rich effusion of its charity which began to pour upon the Ministers that had here taken refuge; nay, he was distinguished from all the rest by a most advantageous portion, and all concurred to do him good. The Prince of Orange took delight in exercising his generous liberality towards him by a considerable pension.

After so many troubles, the time now seemed to be come for Monsieur Claude to enjoy all imaginable quiet at the Hague. Nevertheless it is certain, that he was never less alone, than when one would have thought he was the master of his repose. His house was the refuge of all the unfortunate; obliged he was to hear their lamentations, and ease their grief as much as in him lay. His dispersed flock daily presented fresh objects to his eyes, but sad, and like so many planks that had escaped shipwreck. He received those that were exposed to temptation; was obliged to answer them; was informed that others were fallen under it; and this was for him a matter of affliction and labour, to raise up these infirm persons again from their fall.

The last work of Monsieur Claude is of a different character from the rest.

The Elector of Brandenburg being at Cleves, Monsieur Claude had the honour to pay him his respects. His Electoral Highness expressed to

him the particular esteem he had for his merit : he was desirous to hear him preach ; and accordingly he preached in his palace, at two o'clock in the afternoon, upon these words : "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.) His Electoral Highness seemed extremely well satisfied with his sermon, and uttered his mind accordingly in terms most obliging to its author. Monsieur Claude returned to the Hague, possessed with the glory of that great Prince, who may serve for a model to the most perfect heroes, if it be possible that there is any one that imitates him, in the exercise of that immense charity which he bestowed upon so many unhappy persons, and which bore all the marks of the holy fervency of the primitive and happy days of Christianity.

After Monsieur Claude was returned, we would needs know of him the means that were to be used for the re-uniting the Protestants called of the Confession of Augsburg with those of our communion. He said that in all probability this re-union would not be a work of disputation, which commonly only serves to exasperate people's minds ; that we had reason to praise God, that there were no tenets essential to salvation that divided this holy house of the Lord ; and that the shortest and safest way must be a wise temperament, which it would be easy to find out if

all parties would concur to this good work, and lay in a stock of reciprocal charity, as might reconcile people's minds, and unite their hearts in order to the framing one and the same communion, without declaiming against each other. He was more especially of opinion, that the piety of sovereign Potentates ought to be excited in this occasion, and that their zeal for this peace would be a mighty help for the accomplishment of this important design. This overture, which was made to Monsieur Claude, was a new subject of admiration for him, in expressing to us the sentiments of the Elector of Brandenburg upon this matter; for he told us that this great Prince had discoursed with him about this union with so much zeal, that he was persuaded if this peace was to be a present from heaven in our days, divine providence would principally make use of His Electoral Highness, to whom this glory seemed to be reserved, as to the Prince who can best second this project with his own enlightened understanding, and with his sincere and ardent piety, known and respected by both parties.

For some time, Monsieur Claude had not enjoyed perfect health. He was fixed to study, but his body could not therein follow the motions of his heart; yet did he not love to have his study interrupted in the morning: he bestowed the rest of the day upon all those that were minded to see him. The time after supper was

reserved for his particular friends, who took a most profitable delight in seeing and hearing him at those hours of freedom ; and in those easy conversations, we saw perfect Monsieur Claude discoursing with great openness of heart upon all matters, and especially of that great revolution which is seen at this day in our concerns. His character upon this subject was humble and submissive to the providence of God ; he adored its steps, but also said that they were abysses, which were not to be too much sounded ; that the safest course was to avail ourselves of this judgment of God, and in silence to expect the assistance of his grace. These conversations ever ended with the usual exercises of piety in his family.

After this manner did Monsieur Claude see the days of his sad exile run out till his last sickness, whose doleful remembrance we must renew in this place. There was no regular exercise for preaching in the Walloon church at the Hague ; he nevertheless preached there now and then with so much edification, that in ending his sermon, he excited in the minds of his auditors a passionate longing to hear him again ; and it was to gratify that desire, that he resolved to preach on Christmas-day, December 25th, 1686. His son was gone abroad that day ; he supplied his place : the circumstance of the season determined him upon the choice of the matter. It was requisite to speak of the Saviour of the world's

nativity; for that purpose he chose these words of the Gospel according to St. Luke: "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i. 30, 31, &c.) This sermon was very learned; passages it had of extraordinary perfection; his fancy, ever fruitful and happy, appeared as much in this occasion as in any other of his life. It afforded that turn so fine and so natural, which he knew how to give to the matters he explained; flashes there were, that did in no wise betray the dryness and heaviness of old age; and we may say, in short, that there was throughout observed that grandeur of spirit which influences all his works, that lively penetration, that wise judicious selection, which made the ruling character of that incomparable genius. He uttered this sermon with great eagerness; was heated and inflamed; and in all probability this was the first point of that fatal sickness which bereft the world of him. His whole auditory was charmed with his action. Her Royal Highness the Princess of Orange, who was no less illustrious for the vast extent of

her understanding, and solid piety without pomp, than for the blood of so many Kings, whence she derived her extraction, listened to this Preacher with a most steady application of mind, and was extremely well satisfied with this his performance.

Monsieur Claude was no sooner at home than he found himself very weary. He was seized that evening with a most violent rheum, spent the night with some uneasiness, and on the morrow would have gone and heard the sermon, whatever endeavours were used by his family to hinder him from stirring abroad in that condition. That night he had a fever with pains throughout his whole body ; his distemper was thought to be a rheumatism ; upon this principle did they prescribe for his recovery ; but the humours were in so very great a ferment, that there was no moderating the course of them by any remedy. On the 6th of January he was pressed by severe pains ; he was sensible of the decay of his senses ; and as if he had had a full knowledge that he should not ever have the liberty of expressing his thoughts, he told his son that he desired to speak with me. I repaired immediately to his house ; and in the presence of his family he told me his mind in these terms :—

“ I was desirous,” said he to me, “ to see you, and make my declaration before you. I am a miserable sinner before God. I most heartily

beseech him to show me mercy, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ ; and I hope he will hear my prayer, being the promise he made to repenting sinners. I have reason to praise him for the blessing he has laid upon my ministry, which has not been fruitless in his church : this is an effect of his grace, for which I adore his name."

He took a little breath, and it was to tell us that he had with great application examined all religions ; but had found none worthy of the wisdom of God, and capable to lead a man to true happiness, save the Christian religion. He then added, that among the divers sentiments which divide Christians upon the subject of religion, which he had carefully studied, he had found that the Reformed religion was the only good religion which was to be followed ; that it was entirely found in the word of God ; that this was the fountain from whence it was to be derived ; and that this religion was, as it were, the trunk and body of the tree, to which it became us to keep steady without ever forsaking it. "This is my opinion," said he to me, "and I was willing to declare it to you."

I would have told him, that I was not surprised to hear him discourse in these terms, towards the end of his days, after what he had taught the public by his books, which had been of so great edification to the church. "Let us break off there," said he to me, "and let us not

speak of praises at a time when moments are so precious, and when they ought to be employed to a better use." Here we let fall the conversation, for I perceived that his pains pressed him; and he asked to be put to bed.

A very worthy person, and one of his intimate and ancient friends, would needs pass that night, being Monday, January 6th, in his chamber, that he might do him some small services. His pains were most advantageously rewarded. He had the opportunity of hearing him discourse of the happiness of those that had left France for religion. He made the application of it to him; he besought him, he exhorted him as a Pastor and as a friend, to enjoy that privilege, as a blessing which cannot be sufficiently valued.

The following days nature seemed to make an utmost effort to throw off the disease. He complained of a great pain in the arm that was free; it was thought to be something of the gout. He was a while in this pain; and we were in hopes that this new distemper would save his life. But his strength decaying through the raging of the fever, and the length of the disease, did not help nature. I often saw him, and began to despair of his recovery on Friday, because I perceived he was threatened with a delirium, which was a thing we most dreaded.

His wife asked him if he was not sorry to leave her. "No," answered he, "because I am

going to my God, and I leave you in his hands in a free country. What can I desire more, either for you or for myself?"

On Saturday in the evening Monsieur Claude would needs write to the Prince of Orange. He made use of the hand of one of his friends; for his own was too weak. This letter was short, and conformable to his condition. It expressed the state of his mind and heart, in those last moments of his life. He signed it with some trouble. His Highness received it; and that great Prince, who ever placed the concern of religion in the first rank of so many other important matters, which depend upon his conduct, understood the loss which the church was going to sustain; and, all hero as he was, he was sensible upon perusing it of his being a man as well as we. He valued and lamented the dying person, and shared deep in an affliction common to so many good souls.

On Monday morning, Monsieur Claude asked to speak with his son. As soon as he was come to him, he embraced him tenderly, and said, "I am leaving you, my son: the time of my departure is at hand." His son would have told him, that his distemper was not yet desperate; but he replied, "I have no hopes, save in the mercy of God: that is my principal sanctuary. Take it also for yourself, my son; and never take any other."

Presently after, seeing that Monsieur Claude grew weaker, I asked him whether he would give his blessing to his family, who required it of him through my mouth. "Most willingly," answered he. Immediately his wife fell upon her knees by his bed-side; and he spoke to her in these terms: "My wife, I have always tenderly loved you: be not afflicted at my death. The death of the just is sweet and precious before God. In you have I seen the sentiments of a sincere piety. I praise God for it. Be constant in serving him with your whole heart. He will bless you. I recommend my son and his family to you; and beseech the Lord to bless you."

His son, kneeling by his mother, likewise asked his blessing. Monsieur Claude, who loved him as a father, though he lived with him as a brother, expressed great joy at this request, and made him answer: "My son, I have observed in you two characters, which have mightily pleased me; that of an honest man, and that of a man of honour: maintain these characters to the last. You have chosen the right side: perform your office as a good Pastor, and God will bless you. I recommend your mother to you: love her, respect her. I am persuaded you will not fail in this, and that she will make you suitable returns. Be mindful of this domestic; take care that she want nothing as long as she lives. I give you my blessing." Hereupon these two afflicted persons had not the

power to make him an answer : their tears and silence spoke for them.

I craved his blessing for myself. He was affected and wearied ; yet did he give it me according to my desire.

After that I prayed. He bade me be short ; and alleged his reason for it : “ I am under that oppression,” said he, “ that I am not capable of applying my mind, at this moment, to more than these two great truths ; to meditation on the mercy of God, and to the grace of the Holy Spirit.” “ That is a great deal, Sir,” said I to him : “ they are two most abundant fountains of comfort for you.” I prayed God for him ; and then it was thought fitting we should leave him to his rest.

After the sermon in the morning, they prayed for him in the church, but without naming him. At noon Monsieur Menard and Monsieur Jaquelot came to see Monsieur Claude. Monsieur Menard had been his colleague in Paris. After some short discourse upon Monsieur Claude’s sickness, said Monsieur Claude to Monsieur Menard, “ Pray, Sir, let us talk of things more important, and more available for me. I am in a state of death ; but I hope that God will grant me mercy, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ his Son, who is my only righteousness.” Monsieur Menard seconded this thought, which Monsieur Claude had started ; and Monsieur Claude’s

pangs coming thick upon him, this conversation ended with a prayer.

Monsieur Jaquetot expressed to Monsieur Claude his concern at his illness ; to which Monsieur Claude made answer after a very handsome and Christian manner, in praying to God to bless him.

Monsieur Carre came into his room at one o'clock. As soon as Monsieur Claude saw him, he told him that his last hour was drawing on ; and that in a little time his son would be without a father ; but that he besought him that he would be a father to his son.

Monsieur Carre told him, that he had an esteem for his son ; that he loved him, and should serve him in all he could ; that they were colleagues, and that only death should part them. Monsieur Claude, the father, thanked him ; declared he died satisfied ; and was very intent upon the prayer which Monsieur Carre made for him.

Though Monsieur Claude had not been named after the morning sermon, the report of the danger he was in was immediately spread about the church ; and the affection people had for him, with their pity and fear, drew a world of people to his house : more especially I found there several ladies of his acquaintance, and gentlemen, who expressed how desirous they were to hear Monsieur Claude speak, and receive his blessing.

I approved of their desires ; but added, that it would be a hard matter to procure them that consolation, because his head was not at liberty to talk long together. They nevertheless urged me to make the proposal of it. I accordingly did so, and that immediately, telling him what was desired of him. I added, that the last words of a man of his character would edify as much as several sermons ; and that he owed this succour to the zeal and sympathy of those good souls that required this comfort from him. “ In God’s name,” replied he, “ this desire is just : appoint a fitting time for it, which you know best ;” and which accordingly was immediately appointed ; but he was no longer in a condition to speak. He had had a delirium, which did not allow him the liberty of prosecuting a discourse in such a manner as might have been expected of him.

He was again prayed for in the church, in the afternoon service, and it was thought convenient that he should be named. Monsieur Arbusse, preaching at that time, said, before he entered upon his prayer, that there was one of our brethren that deserved to be lamented by all good people ; that it was Monsieur Claude ; that they were to pray God for him. The whole congregation seemed much concerned at this name. Monsieur Arbusse prayed to God with great zeal ; was herein accompanied by the whole church, which could not forbear weeping before-

hand, for the loss they were going to experience.

After five o'clock, at the evening sermon, Monsieur Du Vivie prayed God for Monsieur Claude. He insisted a good while upon this point: his grief and zeal excited likewise the grief and zeal of the congregation, which dissolved into tears.

At nine o'clock, Monsieur Du Vivie came to see him. As soon as he drew near his bed, Monsieur Claude gave him his blessing. "You have prevented my wishes," said Monsieur Du Vivie to him, "I had a design to ask you your blessing." "God confirm it to you," Monsieur Claude made him answer. Some time after Monsieur Du Vivie spoke to him of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to us by God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. "That is all my hope," answered Monsieur Claude. He added this passage at length: "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day." After which Monsieur Du Vivie offered prayers, which the sick man listened to with great attention.

Half an hour after Monsieur Du Vivie asked him whether he did not find that his condition had some affinity with the state described in Psalm lxxiii.: "My flesh faileth, and mine

heart also ; but God is the strength of mine heart, and my portion for ever."

Monsieur Claude raised his voice, and said twice, "Amen, Amen." He gave his blessing to some persons of his acquaintance that asked it of him. There was especially a deserving young lady, who asked him whether he would impart his blessing to her, as well as to the rest. "Why should I not give it you?" he answered her: "I have seen evident instances of your discretion and piety. I pray God to bless you."

Monsieur Claude falling into a slumber, his son waked him from time to time, to give him consolation. It was done in a few words, he being too weak to prosecute a long discourse. He asked him, if he did not place all his confidence in the death of his Saviour. "Yes, son," replied he; "our Lord Jesus Christ is my only righteousness. I need no other. He is all-sufficient." I asked him whether he was not much pleased in being thus comforted by his son. "I am very well satisfied," he replied: "let him continue." I offered prayers, and stayed with him till eleven o'clock.

On Monday, January 13th, a sad day for us, I was called up at five o'clock in the morning, to go and see Monsieur Claude, who was become extremely weak. I spoke to him but little; he being in great agonies, occasioned by pains in his stomach. At ten o'clock I drew

near his bed, and seeing him in a quieter condition, I asked him whether he knew me. "Yes," said he to me, with a voice pretty strong; "you are my Pastor. My whole recourse is to the mercy of God. I expect a better life than this: help me to fortify me in the exercise of meditation and prayer." Notwithstanding his pains, finding him constant in his pious inclinations, I took upon me the right of his Pastor, that he had conferred upon me. I spoke to him of the sinfulness of mankind, and of the riches of the grace of God, that have appeared in the death of our Saviour Jesus Christ; and I exhorted him to place his whole confidence in the death of that good Saviour. These few words excited his piety. He gave us most sensible testimonies of his repentance, and of the steadfast faith he had in our Saviour Jesus Christ; and in this happy moment did I also apply that precious balm, which our Saviour Jesus Christ has put into our hands, for the consolation of repenting sinners. "Be assured," said I to him, "brother, that your sins are forgiven you, through the mercy of God: I declare it to you in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who has given us a commission for so doing; and I beseech him that he would ratify it to you, by the sentiment of your own conscience." This declaration, which he listened to attentively, afforded him mighty joy. "I am persuaded," said he to me, "that God will hear

the sighs of my soul, and your discourses : let us beseech him so to do, by the prayers I beg you would make in my behalf." Accordingly we fell upon our knees, and I prayed to God for him.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, there was no longer any connexion in Monsieur Claude's discourse ; and we avoided engaging him to speak, for fear of augmenting his delirium. We prayed often for him in that interval. At five o'clock, he had a somewhat violent potion given him to rouse his spirits ; but all ineffectually. At seven o'clock he became much weaker ; yet did he still hear, but was become speechless. I bade him give me a sign whether he understood me, and that he should give me his hand ; accordingly he reached it to me. I took his hand, and said these words of Psalm xxxi. to him : " Into thine hand I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." At these words he pressed my hand, and struggled to raise his head. I continued to exhort him, and again prayed.

Monsieur Arbusse came to see him, and prayed by him ; for he was so weak, and his senses so spent, that prayer was the only assistance he could receive from us. This exercise lasted till half an hour past eleven at night. On January 13th, 1687, Monsieur Menard and I did not stir from his bed-side till his last gasp, when

we saw him calmly expire at that time, and restore his soul into the hands of God.

Thus lived and thus died John Claude, in his sixty-eighth year, after having so worthily performed his office, for the space of about forty-two years. He was by nature quick and lively, but submissive to reason and faith. He was civil, modest, illuminated, wise in his counsels, a true friend, officious without being troublesome, charitable but with choice, and much concerned for the evils which the church laboured under. He understood the world, penetrated into intrigues, and improved all these lights to the repose of the flocks of the Lord. He had a sagacious wit, a vast imagination, a nice judgment, a just choice; his expression was clear, sprightly and strong; his knowledge had passed the test of meditation; he had framed an easy platform of all matters of his profession; each object came in its due place, as soon as he spoke or wrote, and all this was maintained with an exact method and mighty beauty of language. He was a learned Divine, a great Preacher, an able and zealous defender of the Reformation, a rigid observer of our Confession of Faith, an enemy of all such sentiments as might have disturbed the peace of the church, and the purity of religion, and the regulations of our discipline. He was of easy access, of frank and fluent conversation; and all these great qualities were seasoned with

such profound humility, that when he spoke, he seemed to forget what he was, to fit his discourse to the meanest understandings. In France he lived beloved by his friends, esteemed by his adversaries ; and his name, which has passed with so much lustre into foreign countries, has there gained the admiration of those very people who did not love his religion, and ever will be had in veneration in the church.

These characters are to be seen in the works which he has given us ; for to have an heroic idea of him, we must study him and his works.

“ Remember them which have the oversight of you, which have declared unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering what hath been the end of their conversation.” (Heb. xiii. 7.)

THE LIFE

OF

ROBERT SANDERSON, D.D.,

SOMETIME BISHOP OF LINCOLN.

BY IZAAK WALTON.

THE LIFE

ROBERT SANDERSON, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

DR. ROBERT SANDERSON, the late learned Bishop of Lincoln, whose Life I intend to write with all truth and equal plainness, was born September 19th, in the year of our redemption 1587. The place of his birth is Rotherham in the county of York ; a town of good note, and the more for that Thomas Rotherham, some time Archbishop of that see, was born in it ; a man whose great wisdom, and bounty, and sanctity of life, have made it the more memorable ; as indeed it ought also to be, for being the birth-place of our Robert Sanderson. And the reader will be of my belief, if this humble relation of his life can hold any proportion with his great piety, his useful learning, and his many other extraordinary endowments.

He was the second and youngest son of Robert Sanderson, of Gilthwait-hall, in the said parish and county, Esq., by Elizabeth, one of the daugh-

ters of Richard Carr, of Butterthwate-hall, in the parish of Ecclesfield, in the said county of York, gentleman.

This Robert Sanderson, the father, was descended from a numerous, ancient, and honourable family of his own name: for the search of which truth, I refer my reader, that inclines to it, to Dr. Thoroton's "History of the Antiquities of Nottinghamshire," and other records: not thinking it necessary here to engage him into a search for bare titles, which are noted to have in them nothing of reality; for titles not acquired, but derived only, do but show us who of our ancestors have, and how they have, achieved that honour which their descendants claim, and may not be worthy to enjoy. For if those titles descend to persons that degenerate into vice, and break off the continued line of learning, or valour, or that virtue that acquired them, they destroy the very foundation upon which that honour was built: and all the rubbish of their vices ought to fall heavy on such dishonourable heads; ought to fall so heavy, as to degrade them of their titles, and blast their memories with reproach and shame.

But our Robert Sanderson lived worthy of his name and family: of which one testimony may be, that Gilbert, called "the great Earl of Shrewsbury," thought him not unworthy to be joined with him as a godfather to Gilbert Shel-

don, the late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury ; to whose merits and memory posterity (the Clergy especially) ought to pay a reverence.

But I return to my intended relation of Robert the son, who began in his youth to make the laws of God, and obedience to his parents, the rules of his life ; seeming even then to dedicate himself, and all his studies, to piety and virtue.

And as he was inclined to this by that native goodness with which the wise Disposer of all hearts had endowed him ; so this calm, this quiet and happy temper of mind (his being mild, and averse to oppositions) made the whole course of his life easy and grateful both to himself and others : and this blessed temper was maintained and improved by his prudent father's good example ; and by frequent conversing with him, and scattering short apophthegms and little pleasant stories, and making useful applications of them, his son was in his infancy taught to abhor vanity and vice as monsters, and to discern the loveliness of wisdom and virtue ; and by these means, and God's concurring grace, his knowledge was so augmented, and his native goodness so confirmed, that all became so habitual, as it was not easy to determine whether nature or education were his teachers.

And here let me tell the reader, that these early beginnings of virtue were, by God's assisting grace, blessed with that St. Paul seemed to

beg for his Philippians; namely, "that he, that had begun a good work in them, would finish it." (Phil. i. 6.) And Almighty God did; for his whole life was so regular and innocent, that he might have said at his death, (and with truth and comfort,) what the same St. Paul said after to the same Philippians, when he advised them "to walk as they had him for an example." (Phil. iii. 17.)

And this goodness, of which I have spoken, seemed to increase as his years did; and with his goodness, his learning, the foundation of which was laid in the grammar-school at Rotherham, that being one of those three that were founded and liberally endowed by the said great and good Bishop of that name. And in this time of his being a scholar there, he was observed to use an unwearied diligence to attain learning, and to have a seriousness beyond his age, and with it a more than common modesty; and to be of so calm and obliging a behaviour, that the master and whole number of scholars loved him, as one man.

And in this love and amity he continued at that school till about the thirteenth year of his age; at which time his father designed to improve his grammar learning, by removing him from Rotherham to one of the more noted schools of Eton or Westminster; and after a year's stay there, then to remove him thence to Oxford. But, as he went with him, he called on an old friend, a Minister of noted learning, and told him

his intentions ; and he, after many questions with his son, received such answers from him, that he assured his father, his son was so perfect a grammarian, that he had laid a good foundation to build any or all the arts upon ; and therefore advised him to shorten his journey, and leave him at Oxford. And his father did so.

His father left him there to the sole care and manage of Dr. Kilbie, who was then Rector of Lincoln College. And he, after some time, and trial of his manners and learning, thought fit to enter him of that college, and after to matriculate him in the University, which he did July 1st, 1603 ; but he was not chosen Fellow till May 3d, 1606 ; at which time he had taken his degree of Bachelor of Arts : at the taking of which degree, his Tutor told the Rector, that his pupil Sanderson had a metaphysical brain, and a matchless memory ; and that he thought he had improved, or made the last so by an art of his own invention. And all the future employments of his life proved that his Tutor was not mistaken.

I must here stop my reader, and tell him, that this Dr. Kilbie was a man of so great learning and wisdom, and so excellent a critic in the Hebrew tongue, that he was made Professor of it in this University ; and was also so perfect a Grecian, that he was, by King James, appointed to be one of the translators of the Bible : and

that this Doctor and Mr. Sanderson had frequent discourses, and loved as father and son. The Doctor was to ride a journey into Derbyshire, and took Mr. Sanderson to bear him company: and they going together on a Sunday with the Doctor's friend to that parish-church where they then were, found the young Preacher to have no more discretion, than to waste a great part of the hour allotted for his sermon in exceptions against the late translation of several words, (not expecting such a hearer as Dr. Kilbie,) and showed three reasons why a particular word should have been otherwise translated. When evening prayer was ended, the Preacher was invited to the Doctor's friend's house; where, after some other conference, the Doctor told him, he might have preached more useful doctrine, and not have filled his auditors' ears with needless exceptions against the late translation: and for that word, for which he offered to that poor congregation three reasons why it ought to have been translated as he said; he and others had considered all them, and found thirteen more considerable reasons why it was translated as now printed: and told him, if his friend, then attending him, should prove guilty of such indiscretion, he should forfeit his favour. To which Mr. Sanderson said, he hoped he should not. And the Preacher was so ingenuous as to say, he would not justify himself. And so I return to Oxford.

In the year 1608 (July 11th) Mr. Sanderson was completed Master of Arts. I am not ignorant, that for the attaining these dignities the time was shorter than was then, or is now, required; but either his birth, or the well-performance of some extraordinary exercise, or some other merit, made him so: and the reader is requested to believe that it was the last; and requested to believe also, that, if I be mistaken in the time, the college records have misinformed me. But I hope they have not.

In that year of 1608 he was (November 7th) by his college chosen Reader of Logic in the house; which he performed so well, that he was chosen again November 6th, 1609. In the year 1613 he was chosen Sub-Rector of the college, and the like for the year 1614; and chosen again to the same dignity and trust for the year 1616.

In all which time and employments, his abilities and behaviour were such as procured him both love and reverence from the whole society; there being no exception against him for any faults, but a sorrow for the infirmities of his being too timorous and bashful; both which were, indeed, so con-natural that they never left him. And I know not whether his lovers ought to wish they had; for they proved so like the radical moisture in man's body, that they preserved the life of virtue in his soul, which by God's

assisting grace never left him, till this life put on immortality. Of which happy infirmities, if they be so called, more hereafter.

In the year 1614 he stood to be elected one of the Proctors for the University. And it was not to satisfy any ambition of his own, but to comply with the desire of the Rector and whole society of which he was a member; who had not had a Proctor chosen out of their college for the space of sixty years; namely, not from the year 1554 unto his standing; and they persuaded him, that if he would but stand for Proctor, his merits were so generally known, and he so well beloved, that it was but appearing, and he would infallibly carry it against any opposers; and told him, that he would by that means recover a right or reputation that was seeming dead to his college. By these and other like persuasions he yielded up his own reasons to theirs, and appeared to stand for Proctor. But that election was carried on by so sudden and secret, and by so powerful a faction, that he missed it. Which when he understood, he professed seriously to his friends, that if he were troubled at the disappointment, it was for theirs, and not for his own sake; for he was far from any desire for such an employment, as must be managed with charge and trouble, and was too usually rewarded with hard censures, or hatred, or both.

In the year following he was earnestly per-

suaded by Dr. Kilbie and others to renew the logic lectures which he had read some years past in his college ; and, that done, to methodize and print them, for the use and public good of posterity. But though he had an averseness to appear publicly in print ; yet after many serious solicitations, and some second thoughts of his own, he laid aside his modesty, and promised he would ; and he did so in that year of 1615. And the book proved as his friends seemed to prophesy, that is, of great and general use, whether we respect the art or the author. For logic may be said to be an “art of reasoning ;” an art that undeceives men who take falsehood for truth ; enables men to pass a true judgment, and detect those fallacies which in some men’s understandings usurp the place of right reason. And how great a master our author was in this art will quickly appear from that clearness of method, argument, and demonstration, which is so conspicuous in all his other writings. He, who had attained to so great a dexterity in the use of reason himself was best qualified to prescribe rules and directions for the instruction of others. And I am the more satisfied of the excellency and usefulness of this his first public undertaking, by hearing that most Tutors in both Universites teach Dr. Sanderson’s Logic to their pupils, as a foundation upon which they are to build their future studies in philosophy. And, for a further

confirmation of my belief, the reader may note, that, since his book of Logic was first printed, there have not been less than ten thousand sold ; and that it is likely to continue both to discover truth, and to clear and confirm the reason of the unborn world.

It will easily be believed that his former standing for a Proctor's place, and being disappointed, must prove much displeasing to a man of his great wisdom and modesty, and create in him an averseness to run a second hazard of its credit and content : and yet he was assured by Dr. Kilbie, and the Fellows of his own college, and most of those that had opposed him in the former election, that his book of Logic had purchased for him such a belief of his learning and prudence, and his behaviour at the former election had got for him so great and so general a love, that all his former opposers repented what they had done ; and therefore persuaded him to venture to stand a second time. And upon these and other like encouragements he did again, but not without an inward unwillingness, yield up his own reason to theirs, and promised to stand. And he did so ; and was, on April 10th, 1616, chosen Senior Proctor for the year following ; Mr. Charles Cooke of Christ Church being then chosen the Junior.

In this year of his being Proctor there happened many memorable accidents ; namely, Dr.

Robert Abbot, Master of Balliol College, and Regius Professor of Divinity, (who being elected or consecrated Bishop of Sarum some months before,) was solemnly conducted out of Oxford towards his diocess, by the heads of all houses, and the chief of all the University. And Dr. Prideaux succeeded him in the Professorship, in which he continued till the year 1642, (being then elected Bishop of Worcester,) and then our now Proctor, Mr. Sanderson, succeeded him in the Regius Professorship.

And in this year Dr. Arthur Lake, then Warden of New College, was advanced to the bishopric of Bath and Wells : a man of whom I take myself bound in justice to say, that he made the great trust committed to him the chief care and whole business of his life. And one testimony of this truth may be, that he sat usually with his Chancellor in his consistory, and at least advised, if not assisted, in most sentences for the punishing of such offenders as deserved church-censures. And it may be noted, that, after a sentence for penance was pronounced, he did very warily or never allow of any commutation for the offence, but did usually see the sentence for penance executed ; and then as usually preached a sermon of mortification and repentance, and did so apply them to the offenders that then stood before him, as begot in them a devout contrition, and at least resolutions to amend their lives : and having

done that, he would take them, though never so poor, to dinner with him, and use them friendly, and dismiss them with his blessing and persuasions to a virtuous life, and beg them to believe him. And his humility and charity, and other Christian excellences, were all like this. Of all which the reader may inform himself in the Life, truly written, and printed before his sermons.

And in this year also the very prudent and very wise Lord Elsmere, who was so very long Lord Chancellor of England, and then of Oxford, resigning up the last, the Right Honourable, and as magnificent, William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, was chosen to succeed him.

And in this year King Charles the First (then Prince of Wales) came honourably attended to Oxford; and having deliberately visited the University, the schools, colleges, and libraries, he and his attendants were entertained with ceremonies and feasting suitable to their dignity and merits.

And this year King James sent letters to the University for the regulating their studies, especially of the young Divines; advising they should not rely on modern sums and systems, but study the Fathers and Councils, and the more primitive learning. And this advice was occasioned by the indiscreet inferences made by very many Preachers out of Mr. Calvin's doctrine concerning predestination, universal redemption, the irresistibility of God's grace, and of some other knotty

points depending upon these ; points which many think were not, but by interpreters forced to be, Mr. Calvin's meaning ; of the truth or falsehood of which I pretend not to have an ability to judge ; my meaning in this relation being only to acquaint the reader with the occasion of the King's letter.

It may be observed, that the various accidents of this year did afford our Proctor large and laudable matter to relate and discourse upon : and that though his office seemed, according to statute and custom, to require him to do so at his leaving it ; yet he chose rather to pass them over with some very short observations, and present the Governors, and his other hearers, with rules to keep up discipline and order in the University ; which at that time was, either by defective statutes, or want of the due execution of those that were good, grown to be extremely irregular. And in this year also the magisterial part of the Proctor required more diligence, and was more difficult to be managed, than formerly, by reason of a multiplicity of new statutes which begot much confusion ; some of which statutes were then, and others suddenly after, put into a useful execution. And though these statutes were not then made as perfectly useful as they were designed, till Archbishop Laud's time, (who assisted in the forming and promoting them,) yet our present Proctor made them as effectual as discretion and

diligence could do ; of which one example may seem worthy the noting, namely, that if in his night-walk he met with irregular scholars, absent from their colleges at University hours, or disordered by drink, or in scandalous company, he did not use his power of punishing to an extremity, but did usually take their names, and a promise to appear before him unsent for next morning ; and when they did, convinced them with such obligingness and reason added to it, that they parted from him with such resolutions as the man of God was possessed with when he said, "There is mercy with thee, and therefore thou shalt be feared." (Psalm cxxx. 4.) And by this, and a like behaviour to all men, he was so happy as to lay down this dangerous employment, as but very few if any have done, even without an enemy.

After his speech was ended, and he retired with a friend into a convenient privacy, he looked upon his friend with a more than common cheerfulness, and spake to him to this purpose : "I look back upon my late employment with some content to myself, and a great thankfulness to Almighty God, that he hath made me of a temper not apt to provoke the meanest of mankind, but rather to pass by infirmities, if noted ; and in this employment I have had (God knows) many occasions to do both. And when I consider how many of a contrary temper are by sudden and

small occasions transported and hurried by anger to commit such errors as they in that passion could not foresee, and will in their more calm and deliberate thoughts upbraid, and require repentance ; and consider that though repentance secures us from the punishment of any sin, yet how much more comfortable it is to be innocent than need pardon ; and consider, that errors against men, though pardoned both by God and them, do yet leave such anxious and upbraiding impressions in the memory, as abates of the offender's content ; when I consider all this, and that God hath of his goodness given me a temper, and hath prevented me from running into such enormities, I remember my temper with joy and thankfulness. And though I cannot say, with David, (I wish I could,) that therefore 'his praise shall always be in my mouth,' (Psalm xxxiv. 1,) yet I hope that by his grace, and that grace seconded by my endeavours, it shall never be blotted out of my memory ; and I now beseech Almighty God that it never may."

And here I must look back, and mention one passage more in his Proctorship ; which is, that Gilbert Sheldon, the late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, was this year sent to Trinity College in that University ; and not long after his entrance there, a letter was sent after him from his godfather (the father of our Proctor) to let his son know it, and commend his godson to his

acquaintance, and to more than a common care of his behaviour; which proved a pleasing injunction to our Proctor, who was so gladly obedient to his father's desire, that he some few days after sent his servitor to entreat Mr. Sheldon to his chamber next morning. But it seems Mr. Sheldon having (like a young man as he was) run into some such irregularity as made him conscious he had transgressed his statutes, did therefore apprehend the Proctor's invitation as an introduction to punishment; the fear of which made his bed restless that night; but, at their meeting the next morning, that fear vanished immediately by the Proctor's cheerful countenance, and the freedom of their discourse of friends. And let me tell my reader, that this first meeting proved the beginning of as spiritual a friendship as human nature is capable of; of a friendship free from all self ends; and it continued to be so until death forced a separation of it on earth; but it is now re-united in heaven.

CHAPTER II.

AND now, having given this account of his behaviour and the considerable accidents in his Proctorship, I proceed to tell my reader, that,

this busy employment being ended, he preached his sermon for his degree of Bachelor of Divinity, in as elegant Latin, and as remarkable for the matter, as hath been preached in that University since that day. And having well performed his other exercises for that degree, he took it on the 29th of May following, having been ordained Deacon and Priest in the year 1611, by John King, then Bishop of London, who had not long before been Dean of Christ Church, and then knew him so well, that he became his most affectionate friend. And in this year, being then about the twenty-ninth year of his age, he took from the University a licence to preach.

In the year 1618 he was by Sir Nicholas Sanderson, Lord Viscount Castleton, presented to the rectory of Wibberton, not far from Boston, in the county of Lincoln, a living of very good value, but it lay in so low and wet a part of that country, as was inconsistent with his health. And health being, next to a good conscience, the greatest of God's blessings in this life, and requiring therefore of every man a care and diligence to preserve it, he, apprehending a danger of losing it if he continued at Wibberton a second winter, did therefore resign it back into the hands of his worthy kinsman and patron, about one year after his donation of it to him.

And about this time of his resignation he was presented to the rectory of Boothby-pannel in the same county of Lincoln ; a town which has been made famous, and must continue to be famous, because Dr. Sanderson, the humble and learned Dr. Sanderson, was more than forty years Parson of Boothby-pannel, and from thence dated all or most of his matchless writings.

To this living, which was of less value, but a purer air, than Wibberton, he was presented by Thomas Harrington, of the same county and parish, Esq., who was a gentleman of a very ancient family, and of great use and esteem in his country during his whole life. And in this Boothby-pannel the meek and charitable Dr. Sanderson and his patron lived with an endearing, mutual, and comfortable friendship, till the death of the last put a period to it.

About the time that he was made Parson of Boothby-pannel, he resigned his Fellowship of Lincoln College unto the then Rector and Fellows ; and his resignation is recorded in these words :—

Ego Robertus Sanderson, per, &c.

“I, Robert Sanderson, Fellow of the College of St. Mary’s and All Saints, commonly called Lincoln College, in the University of Oxford, do freely and willingly resign into the hands of the Rector and Fellows all the right and title that I

have in the said college, wishing to them and their successors all peace, and piety, and happiness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

“ ROBERT SANDERSON.

“ *May 6th, 1619.*”

And not long after this resignation, he was by the then Bishop of York, or the King, *sede vacante*, made Prebend of the collegiate church of Southwell in that diocess; and shortly after of Lincoln by the Bishop of that see.

And being now resolved to set down his rest in a quiet privacy at Boothby-pannel, and looking back with some sadness upon his removal from his general acquaintance left in Oxford, and the peculiar pleasures of a University life; he could not but think the want of society would render this of a country Parson the more uncomfortable, by reason of that want of conversation; and therefore he did put on some faint purposes to marry. For he had considered, that though marriage be cumbered with more worldly care than a single life, yet a complying and prudent wife changes those very cares into so mutual a content, as makes them become like the sufferings of St. Paul, (Col. i. 24,) which he would not have wanted because they occasioned his rejoicing in them. And he, having well considered this, and observed the secret unutterable joys

that children beget in parents, and the mutual pleasures and contented trouble of their daily care and constant endeavours to bring up those little images of themselves, so as to make them as happy as all those cares and endeavours can make them ; he having considered all this, the hopes of such happiness turned his faint purposes into a positive resolution to marry. And he was so happy as to obtain Ann, the daughter of Henry Nelson, Bachelor in Divinity, then Rector of Haugham, in the county of Lincoln, a man of noted worth and learning. And the Giver of all good things was so good to him as to give him such a wife as was suitable to his own desires ; a wife that made his life happy by being always content when he was cheerful ; that divided her joys with him, and abated of his sorrow, by bearing a part of that burden ; a wife that demonstrated her affection by a cheerful obedience to all his desires during the whole course of his life, and at his death too, for she outlived him.

And in this Boothby-pannel he either found or made his parishioners peaceable, and complying with him in the decent and regular service of God. And thus his parish, his patron, and he lived together in a religious love, and a contented quietness ; he not troubling their thoughts by preaching high and useless notions, but such plain truths as were necessary to be known, believed, and practised, in order to their salvation.

And their assent to what he taught was testified by such a conformity to his doctrine, as declared they believed and loved him. For he would often say, "that, without the last, the most evident truths (heard as from an enemy, or an evil liver) either are not, or are at least the less, effectual, and do usually rather harden than convince the hearer."

And this excellent man did not think his duty discharged by only reading the church prayers, catechizing, preaching, and administering the sacraments seasonably ; but thought if the law or the canons may seem to enjoin no more, yet that God would require more than the defective laws of man's making can do or enjoin ; the performance of that inward law, which Almighty God hath imprinted in the conscience of all good Christians, and inclines those whom he loves to perform. He, considering this, did therefore become a law to himself, practising what his conscience told him was his duty, in reconciling differences, and preventing law-suits, both in his parish and in the neighbourhood. To which may be added, his often visiting sick and disconsolate families, persuading them to patience, and raising them from dejection by his advice and cheerful discourse, and by adding his own alms, if there were any so poor as to need it ; considering how acceptable it is to Almighty God, when we do as we are advised by St. Paul, help to "bear one.

another's burden," (Gal. vi. 2,) either of sorrow or want; and what a comfort it will be, when the Searcher of all hearts shall call us to a strict account for that evil we have done, and the good we have omitted, to remember we have comforted and been helpful to a dejected or distressed family.

And that his practice was to do good, one example may be, that he met with a poor dejected neighbour, that complained he had taken a meadow, the rent of which was nine pounds a year; and when the hay was made ready to be carried into his barn, several days' constant rain had so raised the water, that a sudden flood carried all away, and his rich landlord would bate him no rent; that unless he had half abated, he and seven children were utterly undone. It may be noted, that in this age there are a sort of people so unlike the God of mercy, so void of the bowels of pity, that they love only themselves and children; love them so, as not to be concerned whether the rest of mankind waste their days in sorrow or shame; people that are cursed with riches, and a mistake that nothing but riches can make them and theirs happy. But it was not so with Dr. Sanderson; for he was concerned, and spoke comfortably to the poor dejected man; bade him go home and pray, and not load himself with sorrow; for he would go to his landlord next morning: and if his landlord would not

abate what he desired, he and a friend would pay it for him.

To the landlord he went the next day ; and in a conference the Doctor presented to him the sad condition of his poor dejected tenant ; telling him how much God is pleased when men compassionate the poor ; and told him, that though God loves sacrifice, yet he loves mercy so much better, that he is pleased when called “ the God of mercy.” And told him the riches he was possessed of, were given him by that God of mercy, who would not be pleased, if he, that had so much given, yea, and forgiven him too, should prove like the rich steward in the Gospel, that took his fellow-servant by the throat to make him pay the utmost farthing. This he told him ; and told him, that the law of this nation (by which law he claims his rent) does not undertake to make men honest or merciful ; but does what it can to restrain men from being dishonest or unmerciful, and yet was defective in both ; and that taking any rent from his poor tenant, for what God had suffered him not to enjoy, though the law allowed him to do so, yet if he did so, he was too like that rich steward which he had mentioned to him ; and told him, that riches so gotten, and added to his great estate, would, as Job says, “ prove like gravel in his teeth,” would in time so corrode his conscience, or become so nauseous when he lay upon his death-bed, that

he would then labour to vomit it up, and not be able ; and therefore advised him, being very rich, to make friends of his unrighteous mammon, before that evil day come upon him : but, however, neither for his own sake, nor for God's sake, to take any rent of his poor, dejected, sad tenant ; for that were to gain a temporal and lose his eternal happiness. These and other such reasons were urged with so grave, and so compassionate an earnestness, that the landlord forgave his tenant the whole rent.

The reader will easily believe that Dr. Sanderson, who was himself so meek and merciful, did suddenly and gladly carry this comfortable news to the dejected tenant ; and we believe that at the telling of it there was a mutual rejoicing. It was one of Job's boasts, that he had seen none perish for want of clothing ; and that he had often made the heart of the widow to rejoice. (Job xxxi.) And doubtless Dr. Sanderson might have made the same religious boast of this, and very many like occasions. But, since he did not, I rejoice that I have this just occasion to do it for him ; and that I can tell the reader, I might tire myself and him in telling how like the whole course of Dr. Sanderson's life was to this which I have now related.

Thus he went on in an obscure and quiet privacy, doing good daily both by word and by deed, as often as any occasion offered itself ; yet not so

obscurcly, but that his very great learning, prudence, and piety were much noted and valued by the Bishop of his diocess, and by most of the nobility and gentry of that county. By the first of which he was often summoned to preach many visitation sermons, and by the latter at many assizes. Which sermons, though they were much esteemed by them that procured and were fit to judge them ; yet they were the less valued, because he read them, which he was forced to do ; for though he had an extraordinary memory, (even the art of it,) yet he had such an innate invincible fear and bashfulness, that his memory was wholly useless, as to the repetition of his sermons as he had written them ; which gave occasion to say, when they were first printed and exposed to censure, (which was in the year 1632,) that “the best sermons that were ever read were never preached.”

In this contented obscurity he continued till the learned and munificent Archbishop Laud, who knew him well in Oxford, (for he was his contemporary there,) told the King (it was the knowing and conscientious King Charles I.) that there was one Mr. Sanderson, an obscure country Minister, that was of such sincerity, and so excellent in all casuistical learning, that he desired His Majesty would make him his Chaplain. The King granted it most willingly, and gave the Bishop charge to hasten it ; for he longed

to discourse with a man that had dedicated his studies to that useful part of learning. The Bishop forgot not the King's desire, and Mr. Sanderson was made his Chaplain in Ordinary in November following, 1631. And when they became known to each other, the King did put many cases of conscience to him, and received from him such deliberate, safe, and clear solutions, as gave him great content in conversing with him; so that, at the end of his month's attendance, the King told him, "he should long for the next November; for he resolved to have a more inward acquaintance with him, when that month and he returned." And when the month and he did return, the good King was never absent from his sermons, and would usually say, "I carry my ears to hear other Preachers; but I carry my conscience to hear Mr. Sanderson, and to act accordingly." And this ought not to be concealed from posterity, that the King thought what he spake; for he took him to be his adviser in that quiet part of his life; and he proved to be his comforter in those days of his affliction, when he apprehended himself to be in danger of death or deposing. Of which more hereafter.

In the first Parliament of this good King, (which was 1625,) he was chosen to be a Clerk of the Convocation for the diocess of Lincoln: which I here mention, because about that time did arise many disputes about predestination, and

the many critical points that depend upon or are interwoven in it; occasioned, as was said, by a disquisition of new principles of Mr. Calvin's, though others say they were before his time. But of these Dr. Sanderson then drew up, for his own satisfaction, such a scheme (he called it *Pax Ecclesiæ*) as then gave himself, and hath since given others, such satisfaction, that it still remains to be of great estimation among the most learned. He was also chosen Clerk of all the Convocations during that good King's reign: which I here tell my reader, because I shall hereafter have occasion to mention that Convocation in 1640, the unhappy Long Parliament, and some debates of the predestination point as they have been since charitably handled betwixt him, the learned Dr. Hammond, and Dr. Pierce, the reverend Dean of Salisbury.

In the year 1636 His Majesty, then in his progress, took a fair occasion to visit Oxford, and to take an entertainment for two days for himself and honourable attendants; which the reader ought to believe was suitable to their dignities. But this is mentioned, because at the King's coming thither Dr. Sanderson attended him, and was then (August 31st) created Doctor of Divinity; which honour had an addition to it, by having many of the nobility of this nation then made Doctors and Masters of Arts with him; some of whose names shall be recorded, and live

with his, and none shall outlive it. First, Dr. Curle and Dr. Wren, who were then Bishops of Winton and of Norwich, (and had formerly taken their degrees in Cambridge,) were with him created Doctors of Divinity in his University. So was Meric, the son of the learned Isaac Casaubon; and Prince Rupert, who still lives, the then Duke of Lennox, Earl of Hereford, Earl of Essex, of Berkshire, and very many others of noble birth, (too many to be named,) were then created Masters of Arts.

Some years before the unhappy Long Parliament, this nation being then happy and in peace, (though inwardly sick of being well,) namely, in the year 1639, a discontented party of the Scots Church were zealously restless for another reformation of their Kirk-government; and to that end created a new Covenant, for the general taking of which they pretended to petition the King for his assent, and that he would enjoin the taking of it by all of that nation. But this petition was not to be presented to him by a Committee of eight or ten men of their fraternity; but by so many thousands, and they so armed, as seemed to force an assent to what they seemed to request; so that, though forbidden by the King, yet they entered England, and in their heat of zeal took and plundered Newcastle, where the King was forced to meet them with an army; but upon a treaty and some concessions, he sent

them back (though not so rich as they intended, yet) for that time without bloodshed. But O, this peace, and this Covenant, were but the forerunners of war, and the many miseries that followed; for in the year following there were so many chosen into the Long Parliament, that were of a conjunct counsel with these very zealous and as factious reformers, as begot such a confusion by the several desires and designs in many of the Members of that Parliament, and at last in the very common people of this nation, that they were so lost by contrary designs, fears, and confusions, as to believe the Scots and their Covenant would restore them to their former tranquillity. And to that end the Presbyterian party of this nation did again, in the year 1643, invite the Scotch Covenanters back into England; and hither they came marching with it gloriously upon their pikes and in their hats, with this motto: "For the crown and covenant of both kingdoms." This I saw, and suffered by it. But when I look back upon the ruin of families, the bloodshed, the decay of common honesty, and how the former piety and plain dealing of this now sinful nation is turned into cruelty and cunning, I praise God that he prevented me from being of that party which helped to bring in this Covenant, and those sad confusions that have followed it. And I have been the bolder to say this of myself, because, in a sad discourse with Dr. San-

derson, I heard him make the like grateful acknowledgment.

This digression is intended for the better information of the reader in what will follow concerning Dr. Sanderson. And first, that the Covenanters of this nation, and their party in Parliament, made many exceptions against the Common Prayer and ceremonies of the Church, and seemed restless for a reformation; and though their desires seemed not reasonable to the King, and the learned Dr. Laud, then Archbishop of Canterbury; yet, to quiet their consciences, and prevent future confusion, they did, in the year 1641, desire Dr. Sanderson to call two more of the Convocation to advise with him, and that he would then draw up some such safe alterations as he thought fit in the Service-Book, and abate some of the ceremonies that were least material for satisfying their consciences; and to this end they did meet together privately twice a week at the Dean of Westminster's house, for the space of three months or more. But not long after that time, when Dr. Sanderson had made the reformation ready for a view, the Church and State were both fallen into such a confusion, that Dr. Sanderson's model for reformation became then useless. Nevertheless, his reputation was such, that he was, in the year 1642, proposed by both Houses of Parliament to the King, then in Oxford, to be one of their trustees for the settling

of church-affairs, and was allowed of by the King to be so ; but that treaty came to nothing.

In the year 1643 the two Houses of Parliament took upon them to make an ordinance, and call an assembly of Divines, to debate and settle some church-controversies, of which many were very unfit to judge ; in which Dr. Sanderson was also named ; but he did not appear ; I suppose for the same reason that many other worthy and learned men did forbear, the summons wanting the King's authority. And here I must look back, and tell the reader, that in the year 1642 he was (July 21st) named by a more undoubted authority to a more noble employment, which was to be Professor Regius of Divinity in Oxford ; but though knowledge be said to puff up, yet his modesty and too mean an opinion of his great abilities, and some other real or pretended reasons, (expressed in his speech, when he first appeared in the chair, and since printed,) kept him from entering into it till October, 1646.

He did for about a year's time continue to read his matchless lectures, which were first *de Jureamento*, a point very difficult, and at that time very dangerous, to be handled as it ought to be. But this learned man, as he was eminently furnished with abilities to satisfy the consciences of men upon that important subject ; so he wanted not courage to assert the true obligation of oaths in a degenerate age, when men had made

perjury a main part of their religion. How much the learned world stands obliged to him for these and his following lectures *de Conscientiâ*, I shall not attempt to declare, as being very sensible that the best pens must needs fall short in the commendation of them ; so that I shall only add, that they continue to this day, and will do for ever, as a complete standard for the resolution of the most material doubts in casuistical divinity. And therefore I proceed to tell the reader, that about the time of his reading those lectures, (the King being then prisoner in the Isle of Wight,) the Parliament had sent the Covenant, the Negative Oath, and I know not what more, to be taken by the Doctor of the chair, and all heads of houses ; and all other inferior scholars, of what degree soever, were all to take these oaths by a fixed day ; and those that did not, to abandon their college, and the University too, within twenty-four hours after the beating of a drum ; for if they remained longer, they were to be proceeded against as spies.

Dr. Laud, then Archbishop of Canterbury, the Earl of Strafford, and many others, had been formerly murdered by this noted Parliament ; but the King yet was not ; and the University had yet some faint hopes that in a treaty then in being, or pretended to be suddenly, there might be such an agreement made between King and Parliament, that the Dissenters in the University

might both preserve their consciences and subsistence which they then enjoyed by their colleges.

And being possessed of this mistaken hope, that the Parliament were not yet grown so merciless as not to allow manifest reason for their not submitting to the enjoined oaths, the University appointed twenty delegates to meet, consider, and draw up a manifesto to the Parliament, why they could not take those oaths but by violation of their consciences; and of these delegates Dr. Sheldon, (late Archbishop of Canterbury,) Dr. Hammond, Dr. Sanderson, Dr. Morley, (afterwards Bishop of Winchester,) and that most honest and judicious civil lawyer, Dr. Zouch, were a part: the rest I cannot now name: but the whole number of the delegates requested Dr. Zouch to draw up the law part, and give it to Dr. Sanderson; and he was requested to methodize and add what referred to reason and conscience, and put it into form. He yielded to their desires, and did so. And then after they had been read in a full Convocation, and allowed of, they were printed in Latin, that the Parliament's proceedings and the University's sufferings might be manifested to all nations; and the imposers of these oaths might repent, or answer them: but they were past the first; and for the latter, I might swear they neither can, nor ever will. And these reasons were also suddenly turned into English by

Dr. Sanderson, that those of these three kingdoms might the better judge of the loyal party's sufferings.

About this time the Independents (who were then grown to be the most powerful part of the army) had taken the King from a close to a more large imprisonment; and, by their own pretences to liberty of conscience, were obliged to allow somewhat of that to the King, who had in the year 1646 sent for Dr. Sanderson, Dr. Hammond, Dr. Sheldon, (the late Archbishop of Canterbury,) and Dr. Morley, (afterwards Bishop of Winchester,) to attend him, in order to advise with them, how far he might with a good conscience comply with the proposals of the Parliament for a peace in Church and State; but these, having been then denied him by the Presbyterian Parliament, were now allowed him by those in present power. And as those other Divines, so Dr. Sanderson gave his attendance on His Majesty also in the Isle of Wight, preached there before him, and had in that attendance many both public and private conferences with him, to His Majesty's great satisfaction. At which time he desired Dr. Sanderson, that since the Parliament had proposed to him the abolishing of Episcopal government in the Church, as inconsistent with monarchy, that he would consider of it, and declare his judgment. He undertook to do so, and did it; but it might not be printed till our King's

happy restoration, and then it was. And at Dr. Sanderson's taking his leave of His Majesty in his last attendance on him, the King requested him to betake himself to the writing cases of conscience for the good of posterity. To which his answer was, that he was now grown too old, and unfit to write cases of conscience. But the King was so bold with him as to say, it was the simplest answer he ever heard from Dr. Sanderson; for no young man was fit to be a judge, or write cases of conscience. And let me here take occasion to tell the reader this truth not commonly known; that in one of these conferences this conscientious King told Dr. Sanderson, or one of them that then waited with him, that the remembrance of two errors did much afflict him, which were, his assent to the Earl of Strafford's death, and the abolishing Episcopacy in Scotland; and that if God ever restored him to be in peaceable possession of his crown, he would demonstrate his repentance by a public confession, and a voluntary penance (I think barefoot) from the Tower of London, or Whitehall, to St. Paul's church, and desire the people to intercede with God for his pardon. I am sure one of them that told it me, lives still, and will witness it. And it ought to be observed, that Dr. Sanderson's lectures *de Juramento* were so approved and valued by the King, that in this time of his imprisonment and solitude he translated them into exact

English, desiring Dr. Juxon, (then Bishop of London,) Dr. Hammond, and Sir Thomas Herbert, (who then attended him,) to compare them with the original. The last still lives, and has declared it, with some other of that King's excellences, in a letter under his own hand, which was lately showed me by Sir William Dugdale, King-at-arms. The book was designed to be put into the King's library at St. James's; but, I doubt, not now to be found there. I thought the honour of the author and the translator to be both so much concerned in this relation, that it ought not to be concealed from the reader, and it is therefore here inserted.

CHAPTER III.

I now return to Dr. Sanderson in the chair in Oxford; where they that complied not in taking the Covenant, Negative Oath, and Parliament Ordinance for church discipline and worship, were under a sad and daily apprehension of expulsion: for the Visitors were daily expected, and both city and University full of soldiers, and a party of Presbyterian Divines, that were as greedy and ready to possess, as the ignorant and ill-natured Visitors were to eject the Dissenters out of their colleges and livelihoods; but, notwithstanding,

Dr. Sanderson did still continue to read his lecture, and did, to the very faces of those Presbyterian Divines and soldiers, read with so much reason, and with a calm fortitude make such applications, as, if they were not, they ought to have been, ashamed, and begged pardon of God and him, and forborne to do what followed. But these thriving sinners were hardened ; and as the Visitors expelled the orthodox, they, without scruple or shame, possessed themselves of their colleges ; so that, with the rest, Dr. Sanderson was, in June, 1648, forced to pack up and be gone, and thank God he was not imprisoned, as Dr. Sheldon, Dr. Hammond, and others then were.

I must now again look back to Oxford, and tell my reader, that the year before this expulsion, when the University had denied this subscription, and apprehended the danger of that visitation which followed, they sent Dr. Morley, then Canon of Christ Church, afterwards Lord Bishop of Winchester, and others, to petition the Parliament for recalling the injunction, or a mitigation of it, or accept of their reasons why they could not take the oaths enjoined them ; and the petition was by Parliament referred to a Committee to hear and report the reasons to the House, and a day set for hearing them. This done, Dr. Morley and the rest went to inform and fee Counsel, to plead their cause on the day ap-

pointed ; but there had been so many committed for pleading, that none durst undertake it ; for at this time the privileges of that Parliament were become a *Noli me tangere*, as sacred and useful to them as traditions ever were, or are now, to the Church of Rome : their number must never be known, and therefore not without danger to be meddled with. For which reason Dr. Morley was forced, for want of Counsel, to plead the University's reasons for non-compliance with the Parliament's injunctions : and though this was done with great reason, and a boldness equal to the justice of his cause ; yet the effect of it was, but that he and the rest appearing with him were so fortunate as to return to Oxford without commitment. This was some few days before the Visitors and more soldiers were sent down to drive the Dissenters out of the University. And one that was, at this time of Dr. Morley's pleading, a powerful man in the Parliament, and of that Committee, observing Dr. Morley's behaviour and reason, and inquiring of him, and hearing a good report of his morals, was therefore willing to afford him a peculiar favour ; and, that he might express it, sent for me that relate this story, and knew Dr. Morley well, and told me, he had such a love for Dr. Morley, that knowing he would not take the oaths, and must therefore be ejected his college, and leave Oxford ; he desired I would therefore write to him to ride

out of Oxford when the Visitors came into it, and not return till they left it, and he should be sure then to return in safety; and that he should, without taking any oath or other molestation, enjoy his Canon's place in his college. I did receive this intended kindness with a sudden gladness, because I was sure the party had a power, and as sure he meant to perform it, and did therefore write the Doctor word: and his answer was, that I must not fail to return my friend, who still lives, his humble and undissembled thanks, though he could not accept of his intended kindness; for when the Dean, Dr. Gardner, Dr. Paine, Dr. Hammond, Dr. Sanderson, and all the rest of the college, were turned out, except Dr. Wall, he should take it to be, if not a sin, yet a shame, to be left behind with him only. Dr. Wall I knew, and will speak nothing of him, for he is dead.

It may easily be imagined, with what a joyful willingness these self-loving Reformers took possession of all vacant preferments, and with what reluctance others parted with their beloved colleges and subsistence: but their consciences were dearer than their subsistence, and out they went; the Reformers possessing them without shame or scruple: where I will leave these scruple-mongers, and make an account of the then present affairs of London, to be the next employment of my reader's patience.

And in London all the Bishops' houses were turned to be prisons, and they filled with Divines, that would not take the Covenant, or forbear reading Common-Prayer, or that were accused for some faults like these. For it may be noted, that about this time the Parliament set out a proclamation to encourage all laymen that had occasion to complain of their Ministers for being troublesome or scandalous, or that conformed not to orders of Parliament, to make their complaint to a Committee for that purpose ; and the Minister, though a hundred miles from London, should appear there, and give satisfaction, or be sequestered ; (and you may be sure no parish could want a covetous, or malicious, or cross-grained complainant ;) by which means all prisons in London, and in some other places, became the sad habitations of conforming Divines.

And about this time the Bishop of Canterbury having been by an unknown law condemned to die, and the execution suspended for some days, many of the malicious citizens, fearing his pardon, shut up their shops, professing not to open them till justice was executed. This malice and madness is scarce credible ; but I saw it.

The Bishops had been voted out of the House of Parliament, and some upon that occasion sent to the Tower ; which made many Covenanters rejoice, and believe Mr. Brightman (who probably was a good and well-meaning man) to be

inspired in his comment on the Apocalypse, an abridgment of which was now printed, and called "Mr. Brightman's Revelation of the Revelation." And though he was grossly mistaken in other things, yet, because he had made the churches of Geneva and Scotland, which had no Bishops, to be Philadelphia in the Apocalypse, the angel that God loved ; and the power of Prelacy to be Antichrist, the evil angel, which the House of Commons had now so spewed up, as never to recover their dignity ; therefore did those Covenanters approve and applaud Mr. Brightman for discovering and foretelling the Bishops' downfall ; so that they both railed at them, and rejoiced to buy good pennyworths of their lands, which their friends of the House of Commons did afford them as a reward of their diligent assistance to pull them down.

And the Bishops' power being now vacated, the common people were made so happy, as every parish might choose their own Minister, and tell him when he did, and when he did not, preach true doctrine : and by this and like means several churches had several Teachers, that prayed and preached for and against one another ; and engaged their hearers to contend furiously for truths which they understood not ; some of which I shall mention in the discourse that follows.

I have heard of two men, that in their dis-

course undertook to give a character of a third person; and one concluded he was a very honest man, "for he was beholden to him;" and the other, that he was not, "for he was not beholden to him." And something like this was in the designs both of the Covenanters and Independents, the last of which were now grown both as numerous and as powerful as the former: for though they differed much in many principles, and preached against each other, one making it a sign of being in the state of grace, if we were but zealous for the Covenant; and the other, that we ought to buy and sell by a measure, and to allow the same liberty of conscience to others, which we by Scripture claim to ourselves; and therefore not to force any to swear the Covenant contrary to their consciences, and lose both their livings and liberties too;—though these differed thus in their conclusions, yet they both agreed in their practice to preach down Common-Prayer, and get into the best sequestered livings; and whatever became of the true owners, their wives and children, yet to continue in them without the least scruple of conscience.

They also made other strange observations of election, reprobation, and free-will, and the other points dependent upon these; such as the wisest of the common people were not fit to judge of: I am sure I am not; though I must mention some of them historically in a more proper place, when

I have brought my reader with me to Dr. Sanderson at Boothby-pannel.

And in the way thither I must tell him, that a very Covenanter, and a Scot too, that came into England with this unhappy Covenant, was got into a good sequestered living by the help of a Presbyterian parish, which had got the true owner out. And this Scottish Presbyterian, being well settled in this good living, began to reform the churchyard, by cutting down a large yew-tree, and some other trees that were an ornament to the place, and very often a shelter to the parishioners ; who, excepting against him for so doing, were answered, that the trees were his, and it was lawful for every man to use his own, as he and not as they thought fit. I have heard, (but do not affirm it,) that no action lies against him that is so wicked as to steal the winding-sheet of a dead body after it is buried ; and have heard the reason to be, because none were supposed to be so void of humanity ; and that such a law would vilify that nation that would but suppose so vile a man to be born in it : nor would one suppose any man to do what this Covenanter did. And whether there were any law against him, I know not ; but pity the parish the less for turning out their legal Minister.

We have now overtaken Dr. Sanderson at Boothby parish, where he hoped to have enjoyed himself, though in a poor, yet in a quiet and

desired privacy ; but it proved otherwise ; for all corners of the nation were filled with Covenanters, confusion, Committee-men, and soldiers, serving each other to their several ends, of revenge, or power, or profit ; and these Committee-men and soldiers were most of them so possessed with this Covenant, that they became like those that were infected with that dreadful plague of Athens ; the plague of which plague was, that they by it became maliciously restless to get into company, and to joy (so the historian Thucydides saith) when they had infected others, even those of their most beloved or nearest friends or relations : and though there might be some of these Covenanters that were beguiled, and meant well ; yet such were the generality of them, and temper of the times, that you may be sure Dr. Sanderson, who though quiet and harmless, yet an eminent Dissenter from them, could not live peaceably ; nor did he ; for the soldiers would appear, and visibly disturb him in the church when he read prayers, pretending to advise him how God was to be served most acceptably : which he not approving, but continuing to observe order and decent behaviour in reading the church-service, they forced his book from him, and tore it, expecting extemporary prayers.

At this time he was advised by a Parliament-man of power and note, that valued and loved him much, not to be strict in reading all the

Common-Prayer, but make some little variation, especially if the soldiers came to watch him; for then it might not be in the power of him and his other friends to secure him from taking the Covenant, or sequestration: for which reasons he did vary somewhat from the strict rules of the Rubric. I will set down the very words of confession which he used, as I have it under his own hand; and tell the reader, that all his other variations were as little, and much like to this.

HIS CONFESSION.

“O ALMIGHTY God and merciful Father, we thy unworthy servants do with shame and sorrow confess, that we have all our life long gone astray out of thy ways like lost sheep; and that, by following too much the vain devices and desires of our own hearts, we have grievously offended against thy holy laws, both in thought, word, and deed; we have many times left undone those good duties which we might and ought to have done; and we have many times done those evils, when we might have avoided them, which we ought not to have done. We confess, O Lord, that there is no health at all, nor help in any creature to relieve us; but all our hope is in thy mercy, whose justice we have by our sins so far provoked. Have mercy therefore upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us miserable offenders: spare us, good God, who confess our faults, that we

perish not ; but, according to thy gracious promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord, restore us upon our true repentance into thy grace and favour. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we henceforth study to serve and please thee by leading a godly, righteous, and a sober life, to the glory of thy holy name, and the eternal comfort of our own souls, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

In these disturbances of tearing his service-book, a neighbour came on a Sunday, after the evening service was ended, to visit and condole with him for the affront offered by the soldiers. To whom he spake with a composed patience, and said : " God hath restored me to my desired privacy, with my wife and children ; where I hoped to have met with quietness, and it proves not so : but I will labour to be pleased, because God, on whom I depend, sees it is not fit for me to be quiet. I praise him, that he hath by his grace prevented me from making shipwreck of a good conscience to maintain me in a place of great reputation and profit : and though my condition be such, that I need the last, yet I submit ; for God did not send me into this world to do my own, but to suffer his will, and I will obey it." Thus by a sublime depending on his wise, and powerful, and pitiful Creator, he did cheerfully submit to what God had appointed, justify-

ing the truth of that doctrine which he had preached.

About this time that excellent book of "the King's Meditations in his Solitude" was printed, and made public; and Dr. Sanderson was such a lover of the author, and so desirous that the whole world should see the character of him in that book, and something of the cause for which they suffered, that he designed to turn it into Latin: but when he had done half of it most excellently, his friend Dr. Earle prevented him, by appearing to have done the whole very well before him.

About this time his dear and most intimate friend, the learned Dr. Hammond, came to enjoy a conversation and rest with him for some days; and did so. And having formerly persuaded him to trust his excellent memory, and not read, but try to speak a sermon as he had written it; Dr. Sanderson became so compliant, as to promise he would. And to that end they two went early the Sunday following to a neighbour Minister, and requested to exchange a sermon; and they did so. And at Dr. Sanderson's going into the pulpit, he gave his sermon (which was a very short one) into the hand of Dr. Hammond, intending to preach it as it was written; but before he had preached a third part, Dr. Hammond (looking on his sermon as written) observed him to be out, and so lost as to the matter, that

he also became afraid for him ; for it was discernible to many of the plain auditory. But when he had ended this short sermon, as they two walked homeward, Dr. Sanderson said with much earnestness, "Good Doctor, give me my sermon ; and know, that neither you, nor any man living, shall ever persuade me to preach again without my books." To which the reply was, "Good Doctor, be not angry ; for if I ever persuade you to preach again without a book, I will give you leave to burn all those that I am master of."

Part of the occasion of Dr. Hammond's visit was at this time to discourse with Dr. Sanderson about some opinions, in which if they did not then, they had doubtless differed formerly : it was about those knotty points, which are by the learned called the "quinquarticular controversy," of which I shall proceed, not to give any judgment, (I pretend not to that,) but some short historical account which shall follow.

There had been, since the unhappy Covenant was brought and so generally taken in England, a liberty given or taken by many Preachers (those of London especially) to preach and be too positive in the points of universal redemption, predestination, and those other depending upon these. Some of which preached that all men were, before they came into this world, so predestinated to salvation or damnation, that it

was not in their power to sin so as to lose the first, nor by their most diligent endeavour to avoid the latter. Others, that it was not so; because then God could not be said to grieve for the death of a sinner, when he himself had made him so by an inevitable decree, before he had so much as a being in this world; affirming therefore, that man had some power given him to do the will of God, because he was advised to work out his salvation with fear and trembling; maintaining, that it is most certain that every man can do what he can to be saved; and that he that does what he can to be saved shall never be damned. And yet many that affirmed this would confess that that grace which is but a persuasive offer, and left to us to receive or refuse, is not that grace which shall bring men to heaven. Which truths or untruths, or both, be they which they will, did upon these or the like occasions come to be searched into, and charitably debated betwixt Dr. Sanderson, Dr. Hammond, and Dr. Pierce, afterwards the Dean of Salisbury, of which I shall proceed to give some account, but briefly.

In the year 1648 the fifty-two London Ministers, then a fraternity of Sion College in that city, had in a printed declaration aspersed Dr. Hammond most heinously, for that he had in his Practical Catechism affirmed, that "our Saviour died for the sins of all mankind." To justify which truth he presently makes a charitable

reply, as it is now printed in his works. After which there were many letters passed betwixt the said Dr. Hammond, Dr. Sanderson, and Dr. Pierce, concerning God's grace and decrees. Dr. Sanderson was with much unwillingness drawn into this debate; for he declared it would prove uneasy to him; who in his judgment of God's decrees, differed with Dr. Hammond, whom he revered and loved dearly, and would not therefore engage him into a controversy, of which he could never hope to see an end; but they did all enter into a charitable disquisition of these said points in several letters, to the full satisfaction of the learned; those betwixt Dr. Sanderson and Dr. Hammond being printed in his works; and for what passed betwixt him and the learned Dr. Pierce, I refer my reader to a letter annexed to the end of this relation.

I think the judgment of Dr. Sanderson was by these debates altered from what it was at his entrance into them; for in the year 1632, when his excellent sermons were first printed in quarto, the reader may on the margin find some accusation of Arminius for false doctrine; and find that upon a review and reprinting those sermons in folio in the year 1657, that accusation of Arminius is omitted. And the change of his judgment seems more fully to appear in his said letter to Dr. Pierce. And let me now tell the reader, which may seem to be perplexed with these

several affirmations of God's decrees before mentioned, that Dr. Hammond in a postscript to the last letter of Dr. Sanderson's, "God can reconcile his own contradictions, and therefore advises all men, as the Apostle does, to study mortification, and be wise to sobriety." And let me add further, that if these fifty-two Ministers of Sion College were the occasion of the debates in these letters, they have, I think, been the occasion of giving an end to the quinquarticular controversy; for none have since undertaken to say more; but seem to be so wise as to be content to be ignorant of the rest, till they come to that place where the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open. And let me here tell the reader also, that if the rest of mankind would, as Dr. Sanderson, not conceal their alteration of judgment, but confess it to the honour of God and themselves, then our nation would become freer from pertinacious disputes, and fuller of recantations.

I cannot lead my reader to Dr. Hammond and Dr. Sanderson where we left them at Boothby-pannel, till I have looked back to the Long Parliament, the Society of Covenanters in Sion College, and those other scattered up and down in London, and given some account of their proceedings and usage of the late learned Dr. Laud, then Archbishop of Canterbury. And though I will forbear to mention the injustice of his death, and the barbarous usage of him both then,

and before it ; yet my desire is that what follows may be noted, because it does now, or may hereafter, concern us ; namely, that in his last sad sermon on the scaffold at his death, he having freely pardoned all his enemies, and humbly begged of God to pardon them, and besought those present to pardon and pray for him ; yet he seemed to accuse the Magistrates of the city for suffering a sort of wretched people, that could not know why he was condemned, to go visibly up and down to gather hands to a petition, that the Parliament would hasten his execution. And having declared how unjustly he thought himself to be condemned, and accused for endeavouring to bring in Popery, (for that was one of the accusations for which he died,) he declared with sadness, “that the several sects and divisions then in England,” which he had laboured to prevent, “were likely to bring the Pope a far greater harvest, than he could ever have expected without them ;” and said, “These sects and divisions introduce profaneness under the cloak of an imaginary religion ;” and “that we have lost the substance of religion by changing it into opinion ; and that by these means this Church, which all the Jesuits’ machinations could not ruin, was fallen into apparent danger by those which were his accusers.” To this purpose he spoke at his death ; for this, and more of which, the reader may view his last sad sermon on the scaffold.

And it is here mentioned, because his dear friend, Dr. Sanderson, seems to demonstrate the same in his two large and remarkable prefaces before his two volumes of sermons ; and he seems also with much sorrow to say the same again in his last will, made when he apprehended himself to be very near his death. And these Covenanters ought to take notice of it, and to remember, that, by the late wicked war begun by them, Dr. Sanderson was ejected out of the Professor's chair in Oxford ; and that if he had continued in it, (for he lived fourteen years after,) both the learned of this and other nations had been made happy by many remarkable cases of conscience so rationally stated, and so briefly, so clearly, and so convincingly determined, that posterity might have joyed and boasted that Dr. Sanderson was born in this nation, for the ease and benefit of all the learned that shall be born after him : but this benefit is so like time past, that they are both irrecoverably lost.

CHAPTER IV.

I SHOULD now return to Boothby-pannel, where we left Dr. Hammond and Dr. Sanderson together ; but neither can be found there ; for the first was in his journey to London, and the

second seized upon the day after his friend's departure, and carried prisoner to Lincoln, then a garrison of the Parliament. For the pretended reason of which commitment, I shall give this following account.

There was one Mr. Clarke, the Minister of Alington, a town not many miles from Boothby-pannell, who was an active man for the Parliament and Covenant; one that, when Belvoir Castle (then a garrison for the Parliament) was taken by a party of the King's soldiers, was taken in it, and made a prisoner of war in Newark, then a garrison of the King; a man so active and useful for his party, that they became so much concerned for his enlargement, that the Committee of Lincoln sent a troop of horse to seize and bring Dr. Sanderson a prisoner to that garrison; and they did so. And there he had the happiness to meet with many that knew him so well, as to treat him kindly; but told him, he must continue their prisoner, till he should purchase his own enlargement by procuring an exchange for Mr. Clarke, then prisoner in the King's garrison of Newark. There were many reasons given by the Doctor of the injustice of his imprisonment, and the inequality of the exchange; but all were ineffectual; for done it must be, or continue a prisoner. And in time done it was, upon the following conditions:—

First, that Dr. Sanderson and Mr. Clarke being

exchanged should live undisturbed at their own parishes ; and if either were injured by the soldiers of the contrary party, the other, having notice of it, should procure him a redress by having satisfaction made for his loss, or for any other injury ; or, if not, he to be used in the same kind by the other party. Nevertheless, Dr. Sanderson could neither live safely nor quietly, being several times plundered, and once wounded in three places ; but he, apprehending the remedy might turn to a more intolerable burden by impatience or complaining, forbore both ; and possessed his soul in a contented quietness, without the least repining. But though he could not enjoy the safety he expected by this exchange, yet, by His providence that can bring good out of evil, it turned so much to his advantage, that whereas, his living had been sequestered from the year 1644, and continued to be so till this time of his imprisonment, he, by the articles of war in this exchange for Mr. Clarke, procured his sequestration to be recalled, and by that means enjoyed a poor but contented subsistence for himself, wife, and children, till the happy restoration of our King and Church.

In this time of his poor but contented privacy of life, his casuistical learning, peaceful moderation, and sincerity, became so remarkable, that there were many that applied themselves to him for resolution in cases of conscience ; some known

to him, many not; some requiring satisfaction by conference, others by letters; so many, that his life became almost as restless as their minds: yet he denied no man. And if it be a truth which holy Mr. Herbert says, "that all worldly joys seem less, when compared with showing mercy or doing kindnesses," then doubtless Dr. Sanderson might have boasted for relieving so many restless and wounded consciences; which, as Solomon says, "are a burden that none can bear," though their fortitude may sustain their other infirmities: and if words cannot express the joy of a conscience relieved from such restless agonies, then Dr. Sanderson might rejoice that so many were by him so clearly and conscientiously satisfied; for he denied none, and would often praise God for that ability, and as often for the occasion, and that God had inclined his heart to do it to the meanest of any of those poor but precious souls for which his Saviour vouchsafed to be crucified.

Some of those very many cases that were resolved by letters have been preserved and printed for the benefit of posterity; as namely, 1. Of the Sabbath. 2. Marry with a recusant. 3. Of unlawful love. 4. Of a military life. 5. Of scandal. 6. Of a bond taken in the King's name. 7. Of the engagement. 8. Of a rash vow. But many more remain in private hands, of which one is of simony; and I wish the world

might see it, that it might undeceive some patrons, who think they have discharged that great and dangerous trust, both to God and man, if they take no money for a living, though it may be parted with for other ends less justifiable.

And in this time of his retirement, when the common people were amazed and grown giddy by the many falsehoods and misapplications of truths frequently vented in sermons; when they wrested the Scripture by challenging God to be of their party, and called upon him in their prayers to patronise their sacrilege and zealous frenzies; in this time he did so compassionate the generality of this misled nation, that though the times threatened danger, yet he then hazarded his safety by writing the large and bold preface now extant before his last twenty sermons; (first printed in the year 1655;) in which there was such strength of reason, with so powerful and clear convincing applications made to the Non-conformists, as being read by one of those Dissenting brethren, who was possessed with such a spirit of contradiction, as being neither able to defend his error, nor yield to truth manifest, (his conscience having slept long and quietly in a good sequestered living,) was yet at the reading of it so awakened, that after a conflict with the reason he had met, and the damage he was to sustain if he consented to it, (and being still unwilling to be so convinced, as to lose by being

over-reasoned,) he went in haste to the bookseller of whom it was bought, threatened him, and told him in anger, he had sold a book in which there was false divinity; and that the preface had upbraided the Parliament, and many godly Ministers of that party, for unjust dealing. To which his reply was, (it was Tim. Garthwaite,) that it was not his trade to judge of true or false divinity, but to print and sell books; and yet if he, or any friend of his, would write an answer to it, and own it by setting his name to it, he would print the answer, and promote the selling of it.

About the time of his printing this excellent preface I met him accidentally in London, in sad-coloured clothes, and, indeed, far from being costly. The place of our meeting was near to Little-Britain, where he had been to buy a book, which he then had in his hand. We had no inclination to part presently, and therefore turned to stand in a corner under a penthouse, (for it began to rain,) and immediately the wind rose, and the rain increased so much, that both became so inconvenient, as to force us into a cleanly house, where we had bread, cheese, ale, and a fire, for our money. This rain and wind were so obliging to me, as to force our stay there for at least an hour, to my great content and advantage; for in that time he made to me many useful observations, with much clearness and conscientious freedom. I shall relate a part of them, in

hope they may also turn to the advantage of my reader. He seemed to lament that the Parliament had taken upon them to abolish our Liturgy, to the scandal of so many devout and learned men, and the disgrace of those many martyrs who had sealed the truth and use of it with their blood : and that no Minister was now thought godly that did not decry it, and at least pretend to make better prayers extempore : and that they, and only they, that could do so, prayed by the Spirit, and were godly ; though in their sermons they disputed, and evidently contradicted each other in their prayers. And as he did dislike this, so he did most highly commend the Common-Prayer of the Church, saying, “ the Collects were the most passionate, proper, and most elegant expressions that any language ever afforded ; and that there was in them such piety, and so interwoven with instructions, that they taught us to know the power, the wisdom, the majesty, and mercy of God, and much of our duty both to him and our neighbour ; and that a congregation, behaving themselves reverently, and putting up to God these joint and known desires for pardon of sins, and praises for mercies received, could not but be more pleasing to God, than those unpremeditated expressions, to which many of the hearers could not say, Amen.”

And he then commended to me the frequent use of the Psalter, or Psalms of David ; speaking

to this purpose : that “ they were the treasury of Christian comfort, fitted for all persons and necessities ; able to raise the soul from dejection by the frequent mention of God’s mercies to repentant sinners ; to stir up holy desires ; to increase joy ; to moderate sorrow ; to nourish hope, and teach us patience, by waiting God’s leisure ; to beget a trust in the mercy, power, and providence of our Creator ; and to cause a resignation of ourselves to his will ; and then, and not till then, to believe ourselves happy.” This he said the Liturgy and Psalms taught us ; and that by the frequent use of the last they would not only prove to be our souls’ comfort, but would become so habitual, as to transform them into the image of his soul that composed them. After this manner he expressed himself concerning the Liturgy and Psalms ; and seemed to lament that this, which was the devotion of the more primitive times, should in common pulpits be turned into needless debates about free-will, election, and reprobation ; of which, and many like questions, we may be safely ignorant, because Almighty God intends not to lead us to heaven by hard questions, but by meekness and charity, and a frequent practice of devotion.

And he seemed to lament very much, that, by the means of irregular and indiscreet preaching, the generality of the nation were possessed with such dangerous mistakes, as to think they might

be religious first, and then just and merciful; that they might sell their consciences, and yet have something left that was worth keeping; that they might be sure they were elected, though their lives were visibly scandalous; that to be cunning was to be wise; that to be rich was to be happy, though their wealth was got without justice or mercy; that to be busy in things they understood not was no sin. These and the like mistakes he lamented much, and besought God to remove them, and restore us to that humility, sincerity, and single-heartedness, with which this nation was blessed, before the unhappy Covenant was brought into the nation, and every man preached and prayed what seemed best in his own eyes. And he then said to me, that "the way to restore this nation to a more meek and Christian temper, was to have the body of divinity (or so much of it as was needful to be known) to be put into fifty-two homilies or sermons, of such a length as not to exceed a third or fourth part of an hour's reading; and these needful points to be made so clear and plain, that those of a mean capacity might know what was necessary to be believed, and what God requires to be done; and then some applications of trial and conviction; and these to be read every Sunday of the year, as infallibly as the blood circulates in the body; and then as certainly begun again, and continued the year following: and

that this being done, it might probably abate the inordinate desire of knowing what we need not, and practising what we know, and ought to do." This was the earnest desire of this prudent man. And O that Dr. Sanderson had undertaken it! for then in all probability it would have proved effectual.

At this happy time of enjoying his company and this discourse, he expressed a sorrow by saying to me, "O that I had gone Chaplain to that excellently accomplished gentleman, your friend, Sir Henry Wotton! which was once intended, when he first went Ambassador to the State of Venice; for by that employment I had been forced into a necessity of conversing, not with him only, but with several men of several nations; and might thereby have kept myself from my unmanly bashfulness, which has proved very troublesome, and not less inconvenient to me; and which I now fear is become so habitual as never to leave me: and by that means I might also have known, or at least have had the satisfaction of seeing, one of the late miracles of general learning, prudence, and modesty, Sir Henry Wotton's dear friend, Padria Paulo, who, the author of his life says, was born with a bashfulness as invincible as I have found my own to be: a man whose fame must never die, till virtue and learning shall become so useless as not to be regarded."

This was a part of the benefit I then had by that hour's conversation: and I gladly remember and mention it, as an argument of my happiness, and his great humility and condescension. I had also a like advantage by another happy conference with him, which I am desirous to impart in this place to the reader. He lamented much, that in many parishes, where the maintenance was not great, there was no Minister to officiate; and that many of the best sequestered livings were possessed with such rigid Covenanters as denied the sacrament to their parishioners, unless upon such conditions, and in such a manner, as they could not take it. This he mentioned with much sorrow, saying, "The blessed sacrament did, by way of preparation for it, give occasion to all conscientious receivers to examine the performance of their vows, since they received their last seal for the pardon of their sins past; and to examine and re-search their hearts, and make penitent reflections on their failings; and, that done, to bewail them, and then make new vows or resolutions to obey all God's commands, and beg his grace to perform them. Then the Lord by the sacrament repairs the decays of grace, helps us to conquer infirmities, gives us grace to beg God's grace, and then gives us what we beg; makes us still hunger and thirst after his righteousness, which we then receive, and being assisted with our endeavours, will still so dwell

in us, as to become our satisfaction in this life, and our comfort on our last sick beds." The want of this blessed benefit he lamented much, and pitied their condition that desired, but could not obtain it.

I hope I shall not disoblige my reader, if I here enlarge into a further character of his person and temper. As first, that he was moderately tall: his behaviour had in it much of a plain comeliness, and very little, yet enough, of ceremony or courtship; his looks and motion manifested affability and mildness, and yet he had with these a calm, but so matchless a fortitude, as secured him from complying with any of those many Parliament injunctions that interfered with a doubtful conscience. His learning was methodical and exact, his wisdom useful, his integrity visible, and his whole life so unspotted, that all ought to be preserved as copies for posterity to write after; the Clergy especially, who with impure hands ought not to offer sacrifice to that God whose pure eyes abhor iniquity.

There was in his sermons no improper rhetoric, nor such perplexed divisions, as may be said to be like too much light, that so dazzles the eyes, that the sight becomes less perfect: but there was therein no want of useful matter, nor waste of words; and yet such clear distinctions as dispelled all confused notions, and made his hearers

depart both wiser and more confirmed in virtuous resolutions.

His memory was so matchless and firm, as it was only overcome by his bashfulness; for he alone, or to a friend, could repeat all the Odes of Horace, all Tully's Offices, and much of Juvenal and Persius, without book; and would say, the repetition of one of the Odes of Horace to himself was to him such music, as a lesson on the viol was to others, when they played it to themselves or friends. And though he was blessed with a clearer judgment than other men, yet he was so distrustful of it, that he did over-consider of consequences, and would so delay and re-consider what to determine, that though none ever determined better, yet, when the bell tolled for him to appear and read his divinity lectures in Oxford, and all the scholars attended to hear him, he had not then, or not till then, resolved and writ what he meant to determine; so that that appeared to be a truth, which his old dear friend Dr. Sheldon would often say, namely, "that his judgment was so much superior to his fancy, that whatsoever this suggested, that disliked and controlled; still considering and re-considering, till his time was so wasted, that he was forced to write, not, probably, what was best, but what he thought last." And yet what he did then read, appeared to all hearers to be so useful, clear, and satisfactory, as none ever determined

with greater applause. These tiring and perplexing thoughts begot in him an averseness to enter into the toil of considering and determining all casuistical points ; because during that time they neither gave rest to his body nor mind. But though he would not be always loaden with these knotty points and distinctions ; yet the study of old records, genealogies, and heraldry were a recreation, and so pleasing, that he would say they gave rest to his mind. Of the last of which I have seen two remarkable volumes ; and the reader needs neither to doubt their truth or exactness.

And this humble man had so conquered all repining and ambitious thoughts, and with them all other unruly passions, that, if the accidents of the day proved to his danger or damage, yet he both began and ended it with an even and undisturbed quietness ; always praising God that he had not withdrawn food and raiment from him and his poor family ; nor suffered him to violate his conscience for his safety, or to support himself or them in a more splendid or plentiful condition ; and that he therefore resolved with David, that his praise should be always in his mouth.

I have taken a content in giving my reader this character of his person, his temper, and some of the accidents of his life past ; and more might be added of all : but I will with sorrow look for-

ward to the sad days in which so many good men suffered, about the year 1658, at which time Dr. Sanderson was in a very low condition as to his estate: and in that time Mr. Robert Boyle (a gentleman of a very noble birth, and more eminent for his liberality, learning, and virtue, and of whom I would say much more, but that he still lives) having casually met with and read his Lectures *De Juramento*, to his great satisfaction, and being informed of Dr. Sanderson's great innocence and sincerity, and that he and his family were brought into a low condition by his not complying with the Parliament's injunction, sent him by his dear friend Dr. Barlow (afterwards the learned Bishop of Lincoln) £50, and with it a request and promise. The request was, that he would review the Lectures *De Conscientiâ*, which he had read when he was Doctor of the chair in Oxford, and print them for the good of posterity; and this Dr. Sanderson did in the year 1659. And the promise was, that he would pay him that, or a greater sum if desired, during his life, to enable him to pay an amanuensis, to ease him from the trouble of writing what he should conceive or dictate. For the more particular account of which, I refer my reader to a letter written by the said Dr. Barlow, which I have annexed to the end of this relation.

Towards the end of this year, 1659, when the many mixed sects, and their creators and merci-

less protectors, had led or driven each other into a whirlpool of confusion; when amazement and fear had seized them, and their accusing consciences gave them an inward and fearful intelligence, that the god which they had long served was now ready to pay them such wages as he does always reward witches with for their obeying him; when these wretches were come to foresee an end of their cruel reign, by our King's return, and such sufferers as Dr. Sanderson (and with him many of the oppressed Clergy and others) could foresee the cloud of their afflictions would be dispersed by it; then, in the beginning of the year following, the King was by God restored to us, and we to our known laws and liberties, and a general joy and peace seemed to breathe through the three nations. Then were the suffering Clergy freed from their sequestration, restored to their revenues, and to a liberty to adore, praise, and pray to God in such order as their consciences and oaths had formerly obliged them. And the reader will easily believe that Dr. Sanderson and his dejected family rejoiced to see this day, and be of this number.

It ought to be considered (which I have often heard or read) that in the primitive times men of learning and virtue were usually sought for, and solicited to accept of Episcopal government, and often refused it. For they conscientiously considered, that the office of a Bishop was made up

of labour and care ; that they were trusted to be God's almoners of the Church's revenue, and double their care for the poor ; to live strictly themselves, and use all diligence to see that their family, officers, and Clergy did so ; and that the account of that stewardship must, at the last dreadful day, be made to the Searcher of all hearts ; and that in the primitive times they were therefore timorous to undertake it. It may not be said, that Dr. Sanderson was accomplished with these, and all the other requisites required in a Bishop, so as to be able to answer them exactly ; but it may be affirmed, as a good preparation, that he had at the age of seventy-three years (for he was so old at the King's return) fewer faults to be pardoned by God or man, than are apparent in others in these days, in which, in truth, we fall so short of that visible sanctity and zeal to God's glory, which were apparent in the days of primitive Christianity. This is mentioned by way of preparation to what I shall say more of Dr. Sanderson : and namely, that, at the King's return, Dr. Sheldon, the late prudent Bishop of Canterbury, (than whom none knew, valued, or loved Dr. Sanderson more or better,) was by His Majesty made a chief trustee to commend to him fit men to supply the then vacant bishoprics. And Dr. Sheldon knew none fitter than Dr. Sanderson, and therefore humbly desired the King that he would nominate him ;

and, that done, he did as humbly desire Dr. Sanderson that he would, for God's and the Church's sake, take that charge and care upon him. Dr. Sanderson had, if not an unwillingness, certainly no forwardness, to undertake it; and would often say, he had not led himself, but his friend would now lead him, into a temptation, which he had daily prayed against; and besought God, if he did undertake it, so to assist him with his grace, that the example of his life, his cares, and endeavours might promote His glory, and help forward the salvation of others.

This I have mentioned as a happy preparation to his bishopric; and am next to tell, that he was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln at Westminster, October 28th, 1660.

CHAPTER V.

THERE was about this time a Christian care taken, that those whose consciences were, as they said, tender, and could not comply with the service and ceremonies of the Church, might have satisfaction given by a friendly debate betwixt a select number of them, and some like number of those that had been sufferers for the Church service and ceremonies, and now restored to liberty; of which last some were then preferred to power and

dignity in the Church. And of these Bishop Sanderson was one, and then chosen to be a moderator in that debate ; and he performed his trust with much mildness, patience, and reason : but all proved ineffectual ; for there be some prepossessions like jealousies, which, though causeless, yet cannot be removed by reasons as apparent as demonstrations can make any truth. The place appointed for this debate was the Savoy in the Strand ; and the points debated were, I think, many ; some affirmed to be truth and reason, some denied to be either ; and these debates, being then in words, proved to be so loose and perplexed, as satisfied neither party. For some time that which had been affirmed was immediately forgotten or denied, and so no satisfaction given to either party. But that the debate might become more useful, it was therefore resolved, that the day following the desires and reasons of the Nonconformists should be given in writing, and they in writing receive answers from the Conforming party. And though I neither now can, nor need to mention all the points debated, nor the names of the dissenting brethren ; yet I am sure Mr. Baxter was one, and am sure what shall now follow was one of the points debated.

Concerning a command of lawful superiors, what was sufficient to its being a lawful command ; this proposition was brought by the Conforming party.

“That command which commands an act in itself lawful, and no other act or circumstance unlawful, is not sinful.”

Mr. Baxter denied it for two reasons, which he gave in with his own hand in writing, thus:—

One was: “Because that may be a sin *per accidens*, which is not so in itself, and may be unlawfully commanded, though that accident be not in the command.” Another was, “That it may be commanded under an unjust penalty.”

Again: this proposition being brought by the Conformists, “That command which commandeth an act in itself lawful, and no other act whereby any unjust penalty is enjoined, nor any circumstance whence *per accidens* any sin is consequent which the commander ought to provide against, is not sinful.”

Mr. Baxter denied it for this reason, then given in with his own hand in writing, thus: “Because the first act commanded may be *per accidens* unlawful, and be commanded by an unjust penalty, though no other act or circumstance commanded be such.”

Again: this proposition being brought by the Conformists, “That command which commandeth an act in itself lawful, and no other act whereby any unjust penalty is enjoined, nor any circumstance whence directly, or *per accidens*, any sin is consequent, which the commander ought to provide against, hath in it all things requisite to

the lawfulness of a command, and particularly cannot be guilty of commanding an act *per accidens* unlawful, nor of commanding an act under an unjust penalty."

Mr. Baxter denied it upon the same reasons.

PETER GUNNING.

JOHN PEARSON.

These were then two of the disputants, still alive, and will attest this ; one being now Lord Bishop of Ely, and the other of Chester. And the last of them told me very lately, that one of the dissenters (which I could but forbear to name) appeared to Dr. Sanderson to be so bold, so troublesome, and so illogical in the dispute, as forced patient Dr. Sanderson (who was then Bishop of Lincoln, and a moderator with other Bishops) to say, with an unusual earnestness, that he had never met with a man of more pertinacious confidence, and less abilities, in all his conversation.

But though this debate at the Savoy was ended without any great satisfaction to either party, yet both parties knew the desires, and understood the abilities, of the other, much better than before it ; and the late distressed Clergy, that were now restored to their former rights and power, did at their next meeting in Convocation contrive to give the Dissenting party satisfaction by alteration, explanation, and addition to some part

both of the Rubric and Common-Prayer, as also by adding some new necessary Collects, and a particular Collect of thanksgiving. How many of those new Collects were worded by Dr. Sanderson, I cannot say; but am sure the whole Convocation valued him so much, that he never undertook to speak to any point in question, but he was heard with great willingness and attention; and when any point in question was determined, the Convocation did usually desire him to word their intentions, and as usually approve and thank him.

At this Convocation the Common-Prayer was made more complete, by adding three new necessary offices; which were, "A Form of Humiliation for the Murder of King Charles the Martyr;" "A Thanksgiving for the Restoration of his Son our King;" and "For the Baptizing of Persons of Riper Age." I cannot say Dr. Sanderson did form or word them all, but doubtless more than any single man of the Convocation; and he did also, by desire of the Convocation, alter and add to the forms of prayers to be used at sea, now taken into the Service-Book. And it may be noted, that William, the now Right Reverend Bishop of Canterbury, was in these employments diligently useful, especially in helping to rectify the Calendar and Rubric. And lastly, it may be noted, that for the satisfying all the Dissenting brethren and others, the Convocation's

reasons for the alterations and additions to the Liturgy were by them desired to be drawn up by Dr. Sanderson; which being done by him, and approved by them, was appointed to be printed before the Liturgy, and may be known by this title, "The Preface;" and begins thus: "It hath been the wisdom of the Church."

I shall now follow him to his bishopric, and declare a part of his behaviour in that busy and weighty employment. And first, that it was with such condescension and obligingness to the meanest of his Clergy, as to know and be known to them. And indeed he practised the like to all men of what degree soever, especially to his old neighbours or parishioners of Boothby-pannel; for there was all joy at his table, when they came to visit him; then they prayed for him, and he for them, with an unfeigned affection.

I think it will not be denied, but that the care and toil required of a Bishop may justly challenge the riches and revenue with which their predecessors had lawfully endowed them; and yet he sought not that so much, as doing good both to the present age and posterity; and he made this appear by what follows.

The Bishop's chief house at Bugden, in the county of Huntingdon, the usual residence of his predecessors, (for it stands about the midst of his diocess,) having been at his consecration a great part of it demolished, and what was left

standing under a visible decay, was by him undertaken to be erected and repaired; and it was performed with great speed, care, and charge. And to this may be added, that the King having by an injunction commended to the care of the Bishops, Deans, and Prebends of all cathedral churches, "the repair of them, their houses, and their augmentation of small vicarages;" he, when he was repairing Bugden, did also augment the last, as fast as fines were paid for renewing leases: so fast, that a friend, taking notice of his bounty, was so bold as to advise him to remember he was under his first-fruits, and that he was old, and had a wife and children yet but meanly provided for, especially if his dignity were considered. To whom he made a mild and thankful answer, saying, "it would not become a Christian Bishop to suffer those houses built by his predecessors to be ruined for want of repair; and less justifiable to suffer any of those that were called to so high a calling as to sacrifice at God's altar, to eat the bread of sorrow constantly, when he had a power by a small augmentation to turn it into the bread of cheerfulness; and wished, that as this was, so it were also in his power to make all mankind happy, for he desired nothing more. And for his wife and children, he hoped to leave them a competence, and in the hands of a God that would provide for all that kept innocence, and trusted his providence and protection, which he had

always found enough to make and keep him happy."

There was in his diocess a Minister of almost his age, that had been of Lincoln College when he left it, who visited him often, and always welcome, because he was a man of innocence and open-heartedness. This Minister asked the Bishop what books he studied most, when he laid the foundation of his great and clear learning. To which his answer was, that he declined reading many; but what he did read were well chosen, and read so often, that he became very familiar with them; and said they were chiefly three, Aristotle's Rhetoric, Aquinas's *Secunda Secundæ*, and Tully, but chiefly his Offices, which he had not read over less than twenty times, and could at this age say without book; and told him also, the learned Civilian Dr. Zouch (who died lately) had written *Elementa Jurisprudentiæ*, which was a book that he could also say without book; and that no wise man could read it too often, or love or commend too much; and told him these had been his toil: but for himself he always had a natural love to genealogies and heraldry; and that when his thoughts was harassed with any perplexed studies, he left off, and turned to them as a recreation; and that his very recreation had made him so perfect in them, that he could in a very short time give an account of the descent, arms, and antiquity

of any family of the nobility or gentry of this nation.

Before I give an account of Dr. Sanderson's last sickness, I desire to tell the reader, that he was of a healthful constitution, cheerful and mild, of an even temper, very moderate in his diet, and had had little sickness, till some few years before his death ; but was then every winter punished with a diarrhœa, which left him not till warm weather returned and removed it : and this distemper did, as he grew older, seize him oftener, and continue longer with him. But though it weakened him, yet it made him rather indisposed than sick, and did no way disable him from studying, indeed too much. In this decay of his strength, but not of his memory or reason, (for this distemper works not upon the understanding,) he made his last will, of which I shall give some account for confirmation of what hath been said, and what I think convenient to be known, before I declare his death and burial.

He did in his last will give an account of his faith and persuasion in point of religion, and church-government, in these very words :—

“I, ROBERT SANDERSON, Doctor of Divinity, an unworthy Minister of Jesus Christ, and, by the providence of God, Bishop of Lincoln, being by the long continuance of an habitual distemper brought to a great bodily weakness and faintness

of spirits, but (by the great mercy of God) without any bodily pain otherwise, or decay of understanding, do make this my will and testament, (written all with my own hand,) revoking all former wills by me heretofore made, if any such shall be found. First, I commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God, as of a faithful Creator, which I humbly beseech him mercifully to accept, looking upon it, not as it is in itself, (infinitely polluted with sin,) but as it is redeemed and purged with the precious blood of his only beloved Son, and my most sweet Saviour, Jesus Christ; in confidence of whose merits and mediation alone it is, that I cast myself upon the mercy of God for the pardon of my sins, and the hopes of eternal life. And here I do profess, that as I have lived, so I desire and (by the grace of God) resolve to die in the communion of the catholic Church of Christ, and a true son of the Church of England; which, as it stands by law established, to be both in doctrine and worship agreeable to the word of God, and in the most, and most material points of both, conformable to the faith and practice of the godly churches of Christ in the primitive and purer times, I do firmly believe: led so to do, not so much from the force of custom and education, (to which the greatest part of mankind owe their particular different persuasions in point of religion,) as upon the clear evidence of truth and reason, after a serious and impartial examination

of the grounds, as well of Popery as Puritanism, according to that measure of understanding, and those opportunities, which God hath afforded me : and herein I am abundantly satisfied, that the schism which the Papists on the one hand, and the superstition which the Puritan on the other hand, lay to our charge, are very justly chargeable upon themselves respectively. Wherefore I humbly beseech Almighty God, the Father of mercies, to preserve the Church by his power and providence, in peace, truth, and godliness, evermore to the world's end : which doubtless he will do, if the wickedness and security of a sinful people (and particularly those sins that are so rife, and seem daily to increase among us, of unthankfulness, riot, and sacrilege) do not tempt his patience to the contrary. And I also farther humbly beseech him, that it would please him to give unto our gracious Sovereign, the reverend Bishops, and the Parliament, timely to consider the great danger that visibly threatens this Church in point of religion by the late great increase of Popery, and in point of revenue by sacrilegious inclosures ; and to provide such wholesome and effectual remedies, as may prevent the same before it be too late."

And for a further manifestation of his humble thoughts and desires, they may appear to the reader by another part of his will which follows :—

“ As for my corruptible body, I bequeath it to

the earth whence it was taken, to be decently buried in the parish church of Bugden, towards the upper end of the chancel, upon the second or (at the farthest) the third day after my decease; and that with as little noise, pomp, and charge as may be, without the invitation of any person how near soever related unto me, other than the inhabitants of Bugden; without the unnecessary expense of escutcheons, gloves, ribbons, &c., and without any blacks to be hung any where in or about the house or church, other than a pulpit cloth, a hearse-cloth, and a mourning gown for the Preacher; whereof the former (after my body shall be interred) to be given to the Preacher of the funeral sermon, and the latter to the Curate of the parish for the time being. And my will further is, that the funeral sermon be preached by my own household Chaplain, containing some wholesome discourse concerning mortality, the resurrection of the dead, and the last judgment; and that he shall have for his pains £5, upon condition, that he speak nothing at all concerning my person, either good or ill, other than I myself shall direct; only signifying to the auditory that it was my express will to have it so. And it is my will, that no costly monument be erected for my memory, but only a fair flat marble stone to be laid over me, with this inscription in legible Roman characters, ‘DEPOSITUM ROBERTI SANDERSON NUPER LINCOLNIENSIS EPISCOPI, QUI OBIT

ANNO DOMINI MDCLXII. ET ÆTATIS SUÆ SEPTUAGESIMO SEXTO, HIC REQUIESCIT IN SPE BEATÆ RESURRECTIONIS.' This manner of burial, although I cannot but foresee it will prove unsatisfactory to sundry my nearest friends and relations, and be apt to be censured by others, as an evidence of my too much parsimony and narrowness of mind, as being altogether unusual, and not according to the mode of these times ; yet it is agreeable to the sense of my heart, and I do very much desire my will may be carefully observed herein, hoping it may become exemplary to some or other : at least howsoever testifying at my death (what I have so often and earnestly professed in my life time) my utter dislike of the flatteries commonly used in funeral sermons, and of the vast expenses otherwise laid out in funeral solemnities and entertainments, with very little benefit to any, which, if bestowed in pious and charitable works, might redound to the public or private benefit of many persons."

I am next to tell, that he died January 29th, 1662 ; and that his body was buried in Bugden the third day after his death ; and for the manner, that it was as far from ostentation as he desired it ; and all the rest of his will was as punctually performed. And when I have (to his just praise) told this truth, "that he died far from being rich," I shall return back to visit, and

give a further account of him on his last sick bed.

His last will (of which I have mentioned a part) was made about three weeks before his death; about which time, finding his strength decay by reason of his constant infirmity, and a consumptive cough added to it, he retired to his chamber, expressing a desire to enjoy his last thoughts to himself in private, without disturbance or care, especially of what might concern this world. And that none of his Clergy (which are more numerous than any other Bishop's) might suffer by his retirement, he did by commission empower his Chaplain, Mr. Pullin, with Episcopal power to give institutions to all livings or church-preferments, during this his disability to do it himself. In this time of his retirement he longed for his dissolution; and when some that loved him prayed for his recovery, if he at any time found any amendment, he seemed to be displeased, by saying, his friends said their prayers backward for him; and that it was not his desire to live a useless life, and by filling up a place keep another out of it that might do God and his church service. He would often with much joy and thankfulness mention, that during his being a housekeeper (which was more than forty years) there had not been one buried out of his family, and that he was now likely to be the first. He would also often mention with thankfulness,

that till he was threescore years of age, he had never spent five shillings in law, nor (upon himself) so much in wine : and rejoiced much that he had so lived, as never to cause an hour's sorrow to his good father ; and hoped he should die without an enemy.

He in this retirement had the Church-prayers read in his chamber twice every day ; and at nine at night some prayers read to him and a part of his family out of "the Whole Duty of Man." As he was remarkably punctual and regular in all his studies and actions, so he used himself to be for his meals. And his dinner being appointed to be constantly ready at the ending of prayers, and he expecting and calling for it, was answered, it would be ready in a quarter of an hour. To which his reply was, "A quarter of an hour ! Is a quarter of an hour nothing to a man that probably has not many hours to live ?" And though he did live many hours after this, yet he lived not many days ; for the day after (which was three days before his death) he was become so weak and weary of either motion or sitting, that he was content, or forced, to keep his bed : in which I desire he may rest, till I have given some account of his behaviour there, and immediately before it.

The day before he took his bed, (which was three days before his death,) he, that he might receive a new assurance for the pardon of his sins

past, and be strengthened in his way to the new Jerusalem, took the blessed sacrament of the body and blood of his and our blessed Jesus, from the hands of his Chaplain, Mr. Pullin, accompanied with his wife, children, and a friend, in as awful, humble, and ardent a manner, as outward reverence could express. After the praise and thanksgiving for it was ended, he spake to this purpose: "Thou, O God, tookest me out of my mother's womb, and hast been the powerful protector of me to this present moment of my life: thou hast neither forsaken me now I am become grey-headed, nor suffered me to forsake thee in the late days of temptation, and sacrifice my conscience for the preservation of my liberty or estate. It was by grace that I have stood, when others have fallen under my trials: and these mercies I now remember with joy and thankfulness; and my hope and desire is, that I may die praising thee."

The frequent repetition of the Psalms of David hath been noted to be a great part of the devotion of the primitive Christians; the Psalms having in them not only prayers and holy instructions, but such commemorations of God's mercies, as may preserve, comfort, and confirm our dependence on the power, and providence, and mercy of our Creator. And this is mentioned in order to telling, that as the holy Psalmist said, that "his eyes should prevent both the dawning of the da

and the night watches, by meditating on God's word : " (Psalm cxix. 147 :) so it was Dr. Sander-son's constant practice every morning to entertain his first waking thoughts with a repetition of those very Psalms that the Church hath appointed to be constantly read in the daily morning service ; and having at night laid him in his bed, he as constantly closed his eyes with a repetition of those appointed for the service of the evening, remembering and repeating the very Psalms appointed for every day ; and as the month had formerly ended and began again, so did this exercise of his devotion. And if his first waking thoughts were of the world, or what concerned it, he would arraign and condemn himself for it. Thus he began that work on earth, which is now his employment in heaven.

After his taking his bed, and about a day before his death, he desired his Chaplain, Mr. Pullin, to give him absolution : and at his performing that office, he pulled off his cap, that Mr. Pullin might lay his hand upon his bare head. After this desire of his was satisfied, his body seemed to be at more ease, and his mind more cheerful ; and he said, " Lord, forsake me not now my strength faileth me ; but continue thy mercy, and let my mouth be filled with thy praise." He continued the remaining night and day very patient, and thankful for any of the little offices that were performed for his ease and refreshment ; and during that

time did often say Psalm ciii. to himself, and very often these words, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed where true joy is to be found." His thoughts seemed now to be wholly of death, for which he was so prepared, that the king of terrors could not surprise him "as a thief in the night:" for he had often said he was prepared, and longed for it. And as this desire seemed to come from heaven, so it left him not till his soul ascended to that region of blessed spirits, whose employments are to join in concert with him, and sing praise and glory to that God who hath brought them to that place, "into which sin and sorrow cannot enter."

Thus this pattern of meekness and primitive innocence changed this for a better life. It is now too late to wish that my life may be like his; for I am in the eighty-fifth year of my age: but I humbly beseech Almighty God, that my death may; and do as earnestly beg of every reader to say, Amen.

"Blessed is the man, in whose spirit there is no guile." Psalm xxxii. 2.

DR. PIERCE'S LETTER.

GOOD MR. WALTON,

AT my return to this place, I made a yet stricter search after the letters long ago sent me from our most excellent Dr. Sanderson, before the happy restoration of the King and Church of England to their several rights; in one of which letters more especially, he was pleased to give me a narrative both of the rise and the progress, and reasons also, as well of his younger, as of his last and riper judgment, touching the famous points controverted between the Calvinians and the Arminians, as they are commonly, though unjustly and unskilfully, miscalled on either side.

The whole letter I allude to does consist of several sheets, whereof a good part has been made public long ago, by the most learned, most judicious, most pious Dr. Hammond, (to whom I sent it both for his private and for the public satisfaction, if he thought fit,) in his excellent book, entitled, "A Pacific Discourse of God's Grace and Decrees, in full accordance with Dr. Sanderson;" to which discourse I refer you for an account of Dr. Sanderson, and the history of his thoughts, in his own hand-writing, wherein I sent it to Westwood, as I received it from Boothby-pannel. And although the whole book

(printed in the year 1660, and reprinted since with his other tracts in folio) is very worthy of your perusal; yet, for the work you are about, you shall not have need to read more at present, than from the 8th to the 23d page, and as far as the end of section 33. There you will find in what year the excellent man, whose Life you wrote, became a Master of Arts; how his first reading of learned Hooker had been occasioned by certain Puritanical pamphlets; and how good a preparative he found it for his reading of Calvin's Institutions, the honour of whose name, at that time especially, gave such credit to his errors; how he erred with Mr. Calvin, whilst he took things upon trust in the sublapsarian way; how, being chosen to be a Clerk of the Convocation for the diocess of Lincoln, 1625, he reduced the Quinquarticular Controversy into five schemes or tables; and thereupon discerned a necessity of quitting the sublapsarian way, of which he had before a better liking, as well as the supralapsarian, which he could never fancy. There you will meet with his two weighty reasons against them both, and find his happy change of judgment to have been ever since the year 1625, even thirty-four years before the world either knew, or, at least took notice of it; and more particularly his reasons for rejecting Dr. Twiss, or the way he walks in, although his acute and very learned and ancient friend.

* I now proceed to let you know from Dr. Sanderson's own hand, which was never printed, and which you can hardly know from any, unless from his son, or from myself, that, when that Parliament was broken up, and the Convocation therewith dissolved, a gentleman of his acquaintance, by occasion of some discourse about these points, told him of a book not long before published at Paris (A.D. 1623) by a Spanish Bishop,† who had undertaken to clear the differences in the great controversy *De Concordia Gratiæ et Liberi Arbitrii*. And because his friend perceived he was greedily desirous to see the book, he sent him one of them, containing the four first books of twelve, which he intended then to publish. "When I had read," says Dr. Sanderson, in the following words of the same letter, "his Epistle Dedicatory to the Pope, (Gregory XV.,) he spake so highly of his invention, that I then began rather to suspect him for a mountebank, than to hope I should find satisfaction from his performances. I found much confidence and great pomp of words, but little matter as to the main knot of the business, other than had been said an hundred times before, to wit, of the

* Sir, I pray note, that all that follows between inverted commas are Dr. Sanderson's own words, excellently worthy, but no where else extant; and commend him as much as any thing you say of him.—T. P.

† Aribba.

co-existence of all things past, present, and future, *in mente divinâ realiter ab æterno*, which is the subject of his whole third book ; only he interpreteth the word *realiter* so as to import not only *præsentialitatem objectivam*, (as others held before him,) but *propriam et actualem existentiam* ; yet confesseth it is hard to make this intelligible. In his fourth book he endeavours to declare a twofold manner of God's working *ad extra* ; the one *sub ordine predestinationis*, of which eternity is the proper measure ; the other *sub ordine gratiæ*, whereof time is the measure ; and that God worketh *fortiter* in the one, (though not *irresistibiliter*,) as well as *suaviter* in the other, wherein the free will hath his proper working also. From the result of his whole performance I was confirmed in this opinion ; that we must acknowledge the work of both grace and free will in the conversion of a sinner ; and so likewise in all other events, the consistency of the infallibility of God's foreknowledge at least (though not with any absolute, but conditional predestination) with the liberty of man's will, and the contingency of inferior causes and effects. These, I say, we must acknowledge for the $\delta\tau\iota$: but for the $\tau\acute{o}\ \pi\acute{\omega}\varsigma$, I thought it bootless for me to think of comprehending it. And so came the two *Acta Synodalia Dordrechtana* to stand in my study only to fill up a room to this day.

“And yet see the restless curiosity of man. Not many years after, to wit, A.D. 1632, out cometh Dr. Twiss’s *Vindiciæ Gratiæ*, a large volume, purposely written against Arminius; and then, notwithstanding my former resolution, I must needs be meddling again. The respect I bore to his person and great learning, and the long acquaintance I had had with him in Oxford, drew me to the reading of that whole book. But from the reading of it (for I read it through to a syllable) I went away with many and great dissatisfactions. Sundry things in that book I took notice of, which brought me into a greater dislike of his opinion than I had before: but especially these three: First, that he bottometh very much of his discourse upon a very erroneous principle, which yet he seemeth to be so deeply in love with, that he hath repeated it, I verily believe, some hundreds of times in that work; to wit this; that whatsoever is first in the intention is last in execution, and *e converso*. Which is an error of that magnitude, that I cannot but wonder how a person of such acuteness and subtilty of wit could possibly be deceived with it. All logicians know there is no such universal maxim as he buildeth upon. The true maxim is but this: *Finis qui primus est intentione, est ultimus in executione*. In the order of final causes, and the means used for that end, the rule holdeth perpetually; but in other things it hold-

eth not at all, or but by chance ; or not as a rule, and necessarily. Secondly, that, foreseeing such consequences would naturally and necessarily follow from his opinion, as would offend the ear of a sober Christian at the very first sound, he would yet rather choose not only to admit the said harsh consequences, but professedly endeavour also to maintain them, and plead hard for them in large digressions, than to recede in the least from that opinion which he had undertaken to defend. Thirdly, that seeing (out of the sharpness of his wit) a necessity of forsaking the ordinary sublapsarian way, and the supralapsarian too, as it had diversely been declared by all that had gone before him, (for the shunning of those rocks which either of those ways must unavoidably cast him upon,) he was forced to seek out an untrodden path, and to frame out of his own brain a new way, like a spider's web wrought out of her own bowels, hoping by that device to salve all absurdities that could be objected ; to wit, by making the glory of God, as it is indeed the chiefest, so the only end of all other his decrees, and then making all those other decrees to be but one entire co-ordinate medium conducing to that one end, and so the whole subordinate to it, but not any one part thereof subordinate to any other of the same. Dr. Twiss should have done well to have been more sparing in imputing the *studium partium* to others, wherewith his own eyes, though

of eminent perspicacity, were so strangely blindfolded, that he could not discern how this his new device, and his old dearly beloved principle, like the *Cadmean Sparti*, do mutually destroy the one and the other.

“This relation of my past thoughts having spun out to a far greater length than I intended, I shall give a shorter account of what they now are concerning these points.”

For which account I refer you to the following parts of Dr. Hammond's book aforesaid, where you may find them already printed: and for another account at large of Bishop Sanderson's last judgment concerning God's concurrence or non-concurrence with the actions of men, and the positive entity of sins of commission, I refer you to his letters already printed by his consent, in my large appendix to my “Impartial Inquiry into the Nature of Sin,” sect. lxviii., p. 193, as far as p. 200.

Sir, I have rather made it my choice to transcribe all above out of the letters of Dr. Sanderson, which lie before me, than venture the loss of my originals by post or carrier, which, though not often, yet sometimes fail. Make use of as much or as little as you please, of what I send you from himself, because from his own letters to me, in the penning of his Life, as your own prudence shall direct you; using my name for your warrantry in the account given of him, as much

or as little as you please too. You have a performance of my promise, and an obedience to your desires from

Your affectionate humble servant,
THOMAS PIERCE.

NORTH TIDWORTH,
March 5th, 1677-8.

THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN'S LETTER.

MY WORTHY FRIEND MR. WALTON,

I AM heartily glad that you have undertaken to write the Life of that excellent person, and both for learning and piety, eminent Prelate, Dr. Sanderson, late Bishop of Lincoln; because I know your ability to know, and integrity to write truth: and sure I am, that the life and actions of that pious and learned Prelate will afford you matter enough for his commendation, and the imitation of posterity. In order to the carrying on your intended good work, you desire my assistance, that I would communicate to you such particular passages of his life as were certainly known to me. I confess I had the happiness to be particularly known to him for about the space of twenty years, and, in Oxon, to enjoy his conversation, and his learned and pious instructions while he was Regius Professor of Divinity there. Afterwards, when, in the time of our late un-

happy confusions, he left Oxon, and was retired into the country, I had the benefit of his letters ; wherein, with great candour and kindness, he answered those doubts I proposed, and gave me that satisfaction which I neither had nor expected from some others of greater confidence, but less judgment and humility. Having in a letter named two or three books, written, *ex professo*, against the being of any original sin ; and that Adam, by his fall, transmitted some calamity only, but no crime, to his posterity ; the good old man was exceedingly troubled, and bewailed the misery of those licentious times, and seemed to wonder (save that the times were such) that any should write, or be permitted to publish, any error so contradictory to truth, and the doctrine of the Church of England, established (as he truly said) by clear evidence of Scripture, and the just and supreme power of this nation, both sacred and civil. I name not the books, nor their authors, which are not unknown to learned men, (and I wish they had never been known,) because both the doctrine, and the unadvised abettors of it, are (and shall be) to me apocryphal.

Another little story I must not pass in silence, being an argument of Dr. Sanderson's piety, great ability, and judgment as a casuist. Discoursing with an honourable person,* (whose piety I value

* Robert Boyle, Esq.

more than his nobility and learning, though both be great,) about a case of conscience, concerning oaths and vows, their nature and obligation ; in which, for some particular reasons, he then desired more fully to be informed ; I commended to him Dr. Sanderson's book *De Juramento* : which having read with great satisfaction, he asked me, if I thought the Doctor could be induced to write cases of conscience, if he might have an honorary pension allowed him to furnish him with books for that purpose. I told him I believed he would ; and, in a letter to the Doctor, told him what great satisfaction that honourable person, and many more, had reaped by reading his book *De Juramento* ; and asked him, whether he would be pleased, for the benefit of the Church, to write some tract of cases of conscience. He replied, that he was glad that any had received any benefit by his books ; and added further, that if any future tract of his could bring such benefit to any, as we seemed to say his former had done, he would willingly, though without any pension, set about that work. Having received this answer, that honourable person before-mentioned did, by my hands, return £50 to the good Doctor ; whose condition then, as most good men's at that time were, was but low : and he presently revised, finished, and published that excellent book *De Conscientia* ; a book little in bulk, but not so if we consider the benefit an intelli-

gent reader may receive by it: for there are so many general propositions concerning conscience, the nature and obligation of it, explained and proved with such firm consequence and evidence of reason, that he who reads, remembers, and can, with prudence, pertinently apply them *hic et nunc* to particular cases, may, by their light and help, rationally resolve a thousand particular doubts and scruples of conscience. Here you may see the charity of that honourable person in promoting, and the piety and industry of the good Doctor in performing, that excellent work.

And here I shall add the judgment of that learned and pious Prelate concerning a passage very pertinent to our present purpose. When he was in Oxon, and read his public lectures in the schools as Regius Professor of Divinity, and by the truth of his positions, and evidences of his proofs, gave great content and satisfaction to all his hearers; especially in his clear resolutions of all difficult cases which occurred in the explication of the subject-matter of his lectures; a person of quality, yet alive, privately asked him, what course a young Divine should take in his studies, to enable him to be a good casuist. His answer was, that, a convenient understanding of the learned languages, (at least of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin,) and a sufficient knowledge of arts and sciences presupposed; there were two things in human literature, a comprehension of

which would be of very great use to enable a man to be a rational and able casuist, which otherwise was very difficult, if not impossible.

1. A convenient knowledge of moral philosophy; especially that part of it which treats of the nature of human actions: to know *quid sit actus humanus*, (*spontaneus, invitus, mixtus,*) *unde habent bonitatem et malitiam moralem?* *an ex genere et objecto, vel ex circumstantiis?* “how the variety of circumstances varies the goodness or evil of human actions; how far knowledge and ignorance may aggravate or excuse, increase or diminish, the goodness or evil of our actions.” For every case of conscience being only this, “Is this action good or bad? May I do it, or may I not?” he who, in these, knows not how and whence human actions become morally good and evil, never can, *in hypothesi*, rationally and certainly determine whether this or that particular action be so. 2. The second thing which, he said, would be a great help and advantage to a casuist, was a convenient knowledge of the nature and obligation of laws in general: to know what a law is; what a natural and a positive law; what is required to the *latio, dispensatio, derogatio, vel abrogatio legis*; what promulgation is antecedently required to the obligation of any positive law; what ignorance takes off the obligation of a law, or does excuse, diminish, or aggravate the transgression: for every case of

conscience being only this, "Is this lawful for me, or is it not?" and the law the only rule and measure by which I must judge of the lawfulness or unlawfulness of any action; it evidently follows, that he who, in these, knows not the nature and obligation of laws, never can be a good casuist, or rationally assure himself, or others, of the lawfulness of actions in particular. This was the judgment and good counsel of that learned and pious Prelate; and having, by long experience, found the truth and benefit of it, I conceive I could not, without ingratitude to him, and want of charity to others, conceal it. Pray pardon this rude and, I fear, impertinent scribble; which (if nothing else) may signify thus much, that I am willing to obey your desires, and am indeed

Your affectionate friend,

THOMAS LINCOLN.

LONDON,

May 10th, 1678.

THE LIFE
OF
MRS. ELIZABETH ROWE.

THE LIFE

MRS. ELIZABETH ROWE.

CHAPTER I.

MRS. ELIZABETH ROWE was born at Ilchester in Somersetshire, September 11th, 1674, being the eldest of three daughters of Mr. Walter Singer, a gentleman of a good family, and of Mrs. Elizabeth Portnell, both of them persons of very great worth and piety. Mr. Singer was not a native of the town now mentioned, nor an inhabitant, before his imprisonment there for his nonconformity, in the reign of King Charles II. Mrs. Portnell thinking herself obliged to visit those that suffered for the sake of a good conscience, it was hence that acquaintance first commenced between these two virtuous and well-paired minds, which afterwards proceeded to a union that death alone could dissolve. Till her death Mr. Singer resided at Ilchester, but not long after removed into the neighbourhood of

Frome in the same county, where he became so well known and distinguished for his good sense, primitive integrity, simplicity of manners, uncommon prudence, activity and faithfulness in discharging the duties of his station, inflexible adherence to his principles, and at the same time truly catholic spirit, as to be held in high esteem, even by persons of superior rank; Lord Weymouth, who was reckoned a very good judge of men, not only writing to him, but honouring him with his visits; as did the devout Bishop Kenn very frequently, sometimes once a week: such a charm is there in unaffected goodness, and so naturally do kindred souls, actuated by the same heavenly passion, and pursuing the same glorious end, mingle together with the greatest pleasure, after they are once acquainted, notwithstanding any accidental diversity of sentiments in some smaller things. I mention this to the honour of that venerable Bishop, as well as of Mr. Singer. But the public will be best pleased with the character of this good man, as drawn by his daughter, in one of her familiar letters to a friend:—"I have ease and plenty to the extent of my wishes, and can form desires of nothing but what my father's indulgence would procure; and I ask nothing of heaven but the good old man's life. The perfect sanctity of his life, and the benevolence of his temper, make him a refuge to all in distress, to the widow and fatherless; the people

load him with blessings and prayers whenever he goes abroad ; which he never does but to reconcile his neighbours, or to right the injured and oppressed : the rest of his hours are entirely devoted to his private devotions, and to books, which are his perpetual entertainment."

Mr. Singer was religiously inclined, as he said himself, when about ten years old, and never from that time neglected prayer : and he died as he had lived, April 18th, 1719, full of that blessed calm and peace of mind, and humble confidence in the mercy of God, through the Redeemer, (for there was his trust,) which a long course of active virtue, and constant lively devotion, joined with the most generous and exalted ideas of the divine goodness, may be expected to produce. A worthy and intimate friend of his, and witness to the heroic and Christian manner in which he finished life, observes, that he settled his affairs, and took leave of the world, with the same freedom and composure, as if he had been setting out on a journey ; was peculiarly careful that the widows and orphans, with whose concerns he was entrusted, might not be injured after he was gone ; conversed, though under great bodily disorders, with those that came to see him, who were not a few, in the easiest, freest manner ; spent his time in praising and blessing God, and praying to him, and giving good counsel to those about him ; showed an uncommon sweetness and patience in

his behaviour; and was exceeding thankful to those who did the least thing for him, though they owed him a great deal more. In a memorandum, relating to her father's last sickness and death, Mrs. Rowe herself hath these words: "My father often felt his pulse, and complained that it was still regular, and smiled at every symptom of approaching death. He would be often crying out, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Come, ye holy angels, that rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, come and conduct my soul to the skies, ye propitious spirits;' and then would add, 'But thy time, Lord, not mine, is best. When shall I awake, and be satisfied with thy likeness? What is death? I never made the experiment; and nobody about me knows when persons are dying. I have heard of jaws falling, and eye-strings cracking; but where are the tokens? And yet nature fails, and I am dying. I have seen people die without half so much ado, just lean back, and, having fetched a calm sigh, expire.'"

How lovely is such a death! What an instance of the power of religion, and of the true dignity of human nature, when raised and supported by the grace of God, and the hope of immortality! The sight was so affecting, that a person listed among the freethinkers of the age, as they are pleased to compliment themselves, being present, was exceedingly struck with it, and ready to say, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian;"

as every one who rightly considers such examples, and how naturally they arise out of the principles of the Gospel, firmly believed, and steadily practised upon, must be entirely persuaded by them ; persuaded to embrace it, not as a pleasing imagination, but a most sacred truth.

I have been the larger in this account of Mr. Singer, not only in justice to so deserving a character, but because of the singular veneration which the person who is the chief subject of these papers had for it ; which was such that she frequently pleads her relation to it, and, as it were, glories in it, in her private devotions. A single instance may serve for a specimen :—" I humbly hope I have a rightful claim. Thou art my God, and the God of my religious ancestors, the God of my mother, the God of my pious father. Dying and breathing out his soul, he gave me to thy care ; he put me into thy gracious arms, and delivered me up to thy protection. He told me thou wouldest never leave nor forsake me ; he triumphed in thy long-experienced faithfulness and truth, and gave his testimony for thee with his latest breath."*

Of Mrs. Rowe's two sisters, one died in childhood ; the other survived to her twentieth year, a lovely concurrent in the race of virtue and glory. She had the same extreme passion for

* Devout Exercises of the Heart.

books, chiefly those of medicine, in which art she arrived to a considerable insight ; and if it could not be said of them in the letter, as of the virtuous woman in the Proverbs, that “their candle went not out by night,” yet it frequently burned till after the middle of it ; so great was their thirst for knowledge, and the pleasure they had in gratifying it. What from a laudable emulation, from the ties of blood and friendship, and the advantage of perpetually conversing together, the improvements which two such minds received from each other, could not be little ; and, had heaven seen fit to spare both, would have been still growing. Yet we have no reason to repine, but with grateful joy should own that goodness which, while it summoned one of these seraphic spirits to the skies, continued the other, for so many years after, as a ministering angel here below.

Those who were acquainted with this extraordinary person in her childish years could not but have observed many things not common in that age of life, which promised the bright day that afterwards ensued ; and it must have been with peculiar satisfaction that Mr. Singer, in whom parental affection conspired with a penetrating discernment to heighten the pleasure, beheld the early dawns of a great and good mind in his charming daughter.

When she received the first serious impressions

of religion, does not appear; not unlikely it might be as soon as she was capable of it. A lady of character for good sense and piety, who began her life with her, thinks so; and in one of her pious addresses she herself thus speaks to God: "My infant hands were early lifted up to thee; and I soon learned to know and acknowledge the God of my fathers."*

There is so great a similitude between painting and poetry, as being each of them a pleasing and judicious imitation of nature, and depending upon the beauty and strength of the imagination, that it is no way surprising, one who possessed this faculty in so high a degree of perfection did very early discover an inclination to these two sister arts; which have often the same followers, perhaps always the same admirers, it having been, I believe, seldom known that those who have excelled in one of these arts have not at least had a taste for the charms of the other, and been qualified to judge of its beauties, whether they have made any attempts in it or no.

She loved the pencil when she had hardly strength and steadiness of hand sufficient to guide it; and in her infancy (one may almost venture to say so) would squeeze out the juices of herbs to serve her instead of colours. Mr. Singer, perceiving her fondness for this art, was

* Devout Exercises.

at the expense of a master to instruct her in it ; and it never ceased to be her amusement at times (and a very innocent one it was) till her death. Perhaps, saith an ingenious gentleman, who knew her perfectly well, she liked it the better for the opportunities it yielded her of pleasuring her friends with presents of the best of her drawings, and therein gratifying her beneficent disposition ; for she kept very few of them herself, and these only such as she judged unworthy the acceptance of any one else.

She was also, what every one acquainted with her writings will suppose of such a well-tuned soul, very much delighted with music ; chiefly of the grave and solemn kind, as best suited to the grandeur of her sentiments, and the sublimity of her devotion.

But her strongest bent was to poetry and writing. Poetry indeed was her favourite employment, in youth her most distinguishing excellence. So prevalent was her genius this way, that her very prose hath all the charms of verse without the fetters ; the same fire and elevation, the same bright images, bold figures, rich and flowing diction. She could hardly write a familiar letter but it bore the stamp of the poet. One of her acquaintance remembers to have heard her say, she began to write verses at twelve years old, which was almost as soon as she could write at all. In the year 1696, the twenty-second of

her age, a collection of her poems on various occasions was published at the desire of two of her friends, which we may suppose did not contain all that she had by her, since the ingenious preface gives the reader to hope that the author might in a little while be prevailed with to oblige the world with a second part, no way inferior to the former.

The occasion of her poetical name, Philomela, which from this time she was known by to the world, and whether she assumed it herself, or was complimented with it by her friends, I have not been able to learn. The latter is most probable, and that it was given her at the publication of her poems, before which her modesty not consenting that her own name should appear, this was substituted in the room of it, as bearing a very easy allusion to it, and happily expressing the softness and harmony of her verses, not less soothing and melodious than the strains of the nightingale, when from some leafy shade she fills the woods with her melancholy plaints.*

Though many of these poems are of the religious kind, and all of them consistent with the strictest regard to the rules of virtue; yet some things in them gave her no little uneasiness in advanced life. To a mind that had so entirely

* " Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy."

MILTON.

subdued its passions, or devoted them to the honour of its Maker, and endued with the tenderest conscience, what she could not absolutely approve, appeared unpardonable ; and, not satisfied to have done nothing that injured the sacred cause of virtue, she was displeased with herself for having written any thing that did not directly promote it.

What first introduced her into the notice of the noble family at Longleat, was a little copy of verses of hers, with which they were so highly delighted as to express a curiosity to see her ; and the friendship that commenced from that time subsisted ever after ; not more to her honour, who was the favourite of persons so much superior to her in the outward distinctions of life, than to the praise of their judgment and taste who knew how to prize and took a pleasure to cherish such blooming worth. She was not then twenty. Her paraphrase of the thirty-eighth chapter of Job was written at the request of Bishop Kenn, who was entertained in that family, and gained her a great deal of reputation.

She had no other tutor for the French and Italian languages than the honourable Mr. Thynne, son to the Lord Viscount Weymouth, who willingly took that task upon himself, and had the pleasure to see his fair scholar improve so fast under his lessons, that in a few months she was able to read Tasso's Jerusalem with great ease.

Her merit, with the charms of her person and conversation, had procured her many admirers. Among others, it is said, the famous Mr. Prior would have been glad to share the pleasures and cares of life with her. But Mr. Thomas Rowe was the person reserved by heaven to be the happy man ; both to be made and to make happy.

This gentleman was born at London, April 25th, 1687. He was the eldest son of the Rev. Mr. Benoni Rowe, who, with a very accurate judgment, and a considerable stock of useful learning, joined the talents of preaching, and a most lively and engaging manner in conversation. By both his parents he was creditably descended ; but he had too much personal worth to be under a necessity of borrowing from such foreign aids. His superior genius, and insatiable thirst after knowledge, made themselves taken notice of at an age when the generality of mankind have scarcely outgrown the merely sensitive life. He was able to read as soon almost as he could speak ; had such a pleasure in books, as to take none at all in the diversions which children are usually so fond of ; and, when he was prevailed on by his companions, which was but seldom, to make one in their little parties at play, his unreadiness and inattention plainly showed it was not out of choice he engaged, but purely from his good nature and complaisance, to which he should offer too much violence, always to deny their importunity.

He commenced his acquaintance with the classics at Epsom, while his father resided there ; and by his swift advances in this part of learning, quickly became the delight of his master, a man very able in his profession, and was treated by him with a very particular indulgence, in spite of the natural ruggedness and severity of his temper. When Mr. B. Rowe removed to London, he placed his son under the care of Dr. Walker, the learned master of the Charter-house school, justly famed for the great numbers of excellent linguists that have received their education in that ancient nursery of polite literature. He was one of those who, the Doctor could easily foresee, would do him honour when they should appear abroad in the world, and, we may suppose, did not please him the less on that account. His exercises never failed of being distinguished even among those that had the approbation of the master, who, when he had finished his pupil in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew tongues, would fain have persuaded his father to send him to one of our English Universities. But how honourably soever Mr. Rowe might think of the learning of those noble seats of the Muses, not having the same advantageous notion of the principles in credit there, he would by no means trust a son of his hopes in such hands ; but entered him first at a private academy in London, and, some time before his death, that he might not want

any advantages which the most liberal education could give him, he had determined on his going to Leyden, for the last hand of the great masters there. And well did the fruit reward the expense of the culture. For, after having studied Jewish antiquities under Witsius, civil law under Vitriarius, the belles lettres under Perizonius, and experimental philosophy under Senguerdus, and established a reputation for capacity, application, and an obliging deportment both among the Professors and students, he returned from that celebrated mart of learning with a vast accession of treasure, in books he had purchased, and knowledge he had amassed, and no loss in his morals, which he had preserved uncorrupt.

It was with Mr. Rowe, in respect of his learned avarice, as with those that love money: his desires after knowledge enlarged with his acquisitions, instead of abating. All his morning hours, and a large part of the afternoon, were devoted to study, till the time of his being seized with the distemper of which he died. His library, in collecting which he was assisted by his great knowledge of the best editions of books, consisted of a great number of the most valuable authors; and as he was making continual additions to it, amounted at his death to above five thousand volumes.

He was a perfect master of the Greek, Latin,

and French languages, and, which is seldom known to happen, had at once such a prodigious strength of memory, and inexhaustible fund of wit, the effect of a lively imagination, as would singly have afforded a stock of reputation for any man to trade upon, and much more united. This, with an easy fluency of words, the frankness and benevolence of his temper, a readiness to communicate of his learned store, and a life and spirit which nature must bestow, since it can be but poorly imitated, made his company universally coveted and prized by those that knew him. It was impossible there should be a drowsy soul where Mr. Rowe was present: he animated the conversation, every one was awake, and every one pleased. He had a penetration, and quickness of thought, hardly to be imagined, so as upon just glancing over an author, to see to the bottom of his sentiments. None of the politer kinds of learning were neglected by him. He was a good judge in poetry, and had it in his power to have been himself an eminent poet; for he had actually the most essential parts belonging to that character, the vivid fire, the rich vein, the copious diction; but, as poetry was not his predominant inclination, his genius had not all the polishing which art and constant practice might have added to nature. History was his favourite study, for which his talents of a vast memory, before taken notice of, and an exquisite judg-

ment, for one of his years, peculiarly qualified him.

He had formed a design to compile the Lives of all the illustrious persons in antiquity, omitted by Plutarch, and for this purpose read the ancient historians with great care. This design he in part executed. Eight Lives were published since his decease, by way of supplement to that admired biographer; in which, though so young a guide, he strikes out his way like one well acquainted with the dark and intricate paths of antiquity. The style is perfectly easy, yet concise and nervous; the reflections just, and such as might be expected from a lover of truth and mankind; and the facts interesting in themselves, or made so by the skill used in relating them. There is a preface by the reverend and learned Mr. Chandler, written with great spirit and elegance, and worthy of the excellent person for whose memory he expresses so high an esteem. "He must be insensible to true merit," saith the ingenious prefacer, "and to all just regards to the public good, that can look over these valuable remains, without finding in himself a due respect and esteem raised for the author, and his own heart inspired with an increasing love to the liberties and welfare of his country." Besides these Lives, the author had finished and fitted for the press the Life of Thrasybulus, which being put into the hands of Sir Richard Steele for his revision, was,

somehow or other, unhappily lost, and could never since be recovered. The famous Mr. Dacier having translated Plutarch's Lives into French, with remarks historical and critical ; the Abbé Bellenger, already known in the republic of letters, by some works that do him honour, added in 1734 a ninth tome to the other eight, consisting of the Life of Hannibal, and Mr. Rowe's Lives, made French by that learned Abbé ; in the preface to which version he transcribes from the preface to the English edition the character of the author, with visible approbation ; and saith, the Lives were written with taste, though, being a posthumous work, the author had not put his last hand to it. We may presume, from the fidelity with which the French translator follows his original, not omitting the freest passages, and boldest strokes against tyranny, or any way qualifying or correcting, and expressing his dissent from them, that he had no aversion to the author's notions of the rights and liberties of mankind. On occasion of the honour done the memory of his dear brother, by this learned foreigner, Mr. Theophilus Rowe composed the following lines :—

“ O friend ! O brother ! can thy dear-loved name
Rise to my view, nor pious sorrows claim ?
O early fled to thy congenial skies,
Ere I could know thy matchless worth to prize !
Now ripen'd judgment gives that worth to see,
And, next a father lost, I mourn for thee ;

For thee, whose friendship had that loss supplied,
In youth my guardian, and in age my guide.
Thy voice had taught to bend my stubborn will,
Lured me to good, and warn'd my wish from ill.
While virtue in thy life to sight confest,
With heavenly charms had vanquish'd all my breast,
With borrow'd vigour I had learn'd to tread
The path she points, by thy example led :
Now, my guide lost, I trace the arduous way
With feeble step, and scarce forbear to stray.
O friend ! O brother !—but why thus again
Will these dear names my tortured memory pain ?
For ever gone, thou wilt not leave the skies
For friendship's wild complaints, or nature's cries.
Ah ! what avail'd with studious toil to' explore
What ancient wit had taught, or modern lore,
Since not the treasured stores of wisdom save
The laurel'd head from the devouring grave !
Yet if, bless'd spirit, minds celestial know
To joy at honour paid their names below,
Hear Philomela's strains rehearse thy praise,
While every Muse inspires the moving lays ;
Lays that shall last while virtue boasts to warm
The generous breast, or sacred verse can charm :
And see thy works through foreign nations known ;
France views their worth, and makes thy Lives her own,
And, conscious of their right to equal fame,
The rival volume joins to Plutarch's name."

Being at Bath in the year 1709, Mr. Rowe was introduced by a gentleman of her acquaintance, into Mrs. Singer's company, who lived in a retirement not far distant from that city. The idea he conceived of her from report, and from her writings, charmed him ; but when he had

seen and conversed with her, he felt another kind of impression from the presence of so much beauty, wit, and virtue. During the courtship, he wrote a poetical epistle to a friend that was a neighbour of Mrs. Singer, and intimate in the family. I shall take the liberty to quote a few lines out of it, not so much for a specimen of Mr. Rowe's poetical genius as his passionate veneration for Mrs. Singer.

" Youth's liveliest bloom, a never-fading grace,
And more than beauty sparkles in her face ;
Yet the bright form creates no loose desires,
At once she gives, and purifies our fires,
And passions chaste as her own soul inspires ;
Her soul, heaven's noblest workmanship, design'd
To bless the ruin'd age, and succour lost mankind ;
To prop abandon'd virtue's sinking cause,
And snatch from vice its undeserved applause."

Mrs. Elizabeth Singer was married to Mr. Thomas Rowe in the year 1710, on which occasion a learned friend of Mr. Rowe * wrote the following beautiful Latin epigram :—

IN NUPTIAS THOMÆ ROWE ET ELIZABETHÆ
SINGER.

*Quid doctum par usque tuum, sociosque labores
Fabræ et Dacerii, Gallia vana crepas ?
Par majus gens Angla dedit, juvenem atque puellam,
Quos hodie sacro fœdere junxit amor.
Namque ea quæ nostri Phæbo cecinere decante,
Explicuisse tuis gloria summa foret.*

* Mr. John Russel.

Thus translated by a young gentleman :—

ON THE MARRIAGE OF MR. THOMAS ROWE AND
MRS. ELIZABETH SINGER.

“ No more, proud Gallia, bid the world revere
Thy learned pair, Le Fèvre and Dacler ;
Britain may boast this happy day unites
Two nobler minds in Hymen’s sacred rites :
What these have sung, while all the’ inspiring Nine
Exalt the beauties of the verse divine,
Those (humble critics of the’ immortal strain)
Shall bound their fame to comment and explain.”

Mrs. Rowe’s exalted merit and amiable qualities could not fail to inspire the most generous and lasting passion. Mr. Rowe knew how to value that treasure of wit, softness, and virtue, which the divine providence had given to his arms in the most lovely of women, and made it his study to repay the felicity with which she crowned his life. The esteem and tenderness he had for her was inexpressible. It was some considerable time after his marriage, that he wrote to her a very tender ode, under the name of Delia, full of the warmest sentiments of connubial friendship and affection ; in which the following lines may appear remarkable, as it pleased heaven to dispose events in a manner so agreeable to the wishes expressed in them :—

“ So long may thy inspiring page
And great example bless the rising age ;

Long in thy charming prison may'st thou stay,
Late, very late, ascend the well-known way,
And add new glories to the realms of day !
At least heaven will not, sure, this prayer deny :—
Short be my life's uncertain date,
And earlier far than thine the destined hour of fate !
Whene'er it comes, may'st thou be by,
Support my sinking frame, and teach me how to die ;
Banish desponding nature's gloom,
Make me to hope a gentle doom,
And fix me all on joys to come ;
With swimming eyes I'll gaze upon thy charms,
And clasp thee dying in my fainting arms :
Then, gently leaning on thy breast,
Sink in soft slumbers to eternal rest.
The ghastly form shall have a pleasing air,
And all things smile, while heaven and thou art there.'

CHAPTER II.

As Mr. Rowe had not a robust natural constitution, so an intense application to study beyond what the delicacy of his frame would bear, might perhaps contribute to that ill state of health which allayed the happiness of his marriage life, during the greater part of it. In the latter end of the year 1714 his weakness increased, and he appeared to labour under all the symptoms of a consumption. This fatal distemper, after it had confined him some months, cut off the fairest hopes of his doing great honour and service to

his country, and put a period to his life, May 13th, 1715, when he was but just past the twenty-eighth year of his age. He died at Hampstead, near London, where he had resided some time for the benefit of the air; and was buried in the vault belonging to his family, in the cemetery in Bunhill-fields; where on his tomb are only marked his name, and the date of his birth and death. But an inscription of greater pomp is rendered unnecessary by the honour Mrs. Rowe did his memory in the following Elegy she wrote on his death, which is deservedly ranked among the most admirable of her poetical works:—

ON THE DEATH OF MR. THOMAS ROWE.

IN what soft language shall my thoughts get free,
My dear Alexis, when I talk of thee?
Ye Muses, Graces, all ye gentle train
Of weeping Loves, assist the pensive strain!
But why should I implore your moving art?
'Tis but to speak the dictates of my heart;
And all that knew the charming youth will join
Their friendly sighs and pious tears to mine:
For all that knew his merit must confess,
In grief for him there can be no excess.

His soul was form'd to act each glorious part
Of life, unstain'd with vanity or art:
No thought within his generous mind had birth,
But what he might have own'd to heaven and earth.
Practised by him, each virtue grew more bright,
And shone with more than its own native light.
Whatever noble warmth could recommend
The just, the active, and the constant friend,

Was all his own :—but, O ! a dearer name,
And softer ties my endless sorrow claim ;
Lost in despair, distracted, and forlorn,
The lover I, and tender husband, mourn.
Whate'er to such superior worth was due,
Whate'er excess the fondest passion knew,
I felt for thee, dear youth ; my joy, my care,
My prayers themselves were thine ; and only where
Thou wast concern'd, my virtue was sincere.
Whene'er I begg'd for blessings on thy head,
Nothing was cold or formal that I said ;
My warmest vows to heaven were made for thee,
And love still mingled with my piety.

O thou wast all my glory, all my pride !
Through life's uncertain paths, my constant guide :
Regardless of the world, to gain thy praise,
Was all that could my just ambition raise.

Why has my heart this fond engagement known ?
Or why has heaven dissolved the tie so soon ?
Why was the charming youth so form'd to move ?
Or why was all my soul so turn'd for love ?
But virtue here a vain defence had made,
Where so much worth and eloquence could plead.
For he could talk—'twas ecstasy to hear,
'Twas joy, 'twas harmony to every ear !
Eternal music dwelt upon his tongue,
Soft and transporting as the Muses' song :
List'ning to him, my cares were charm'd to rest,
And love and silent rapture fill'd my breast !
Unheeded the gay moments took their flight,
And time was only measured by delight.
I hear the loved, the melting accents still,
And still the kind, the tender transport feel :
Again I see the sprightly passions rise,
And life and pleasure sparkle in his eyes.
My fancy paints him now with every grace,
But, ah ! the dear delusion mocks my fond embrace ;

The smiling vision takes its hasty flight,
And scenes of horror swim before my sight.
Grief and despair in all their terrors rise,
A dying lover pale and gasping lies.
Each dismal circumstance appears in view,
The fatal object is for ever new.

His anguish with the quickest sense I feel,
And hear this sad, this moving language still:—

“ My dearest wife ! my last, my fondest care !
Sure heaven for thee will hear a dying prayer :
Be thou the charge of sacred Providence,
When I am gone, be that thy kind defence ;
Ten thousand smiling blessings crown thy head,
When I am cold and number'd with the dead.
Think on thy vows, be to my memory just ;
My future fame and honour are thy trust.
From all engagements here I now am free,
But that which keeps my lingering soul with thee.
How much I love, thy bleeding heart can tell,
Which does, like mine, the pangs of parting feel :
But haste to meet me on those happy plains
Where mighty love in endless triumph reigns.”

He ceased ; then gently yielded up his breath,
And fell a blooming sacrifice to death :
But O ! what words, what numbers can express,
What thought conceive the height of my distress ?
Why did they tear me from thy breathless clay ?
I should have stay'd, and wept my life away.
Yet, gentle shade, whether thou now dost rove
Through some bless'd vale, or ever-verdant grove ;
One moment listen to my grief, and take
The softest vows that constant love can make.

For thee all thoughts of pleasure I forego,
For thee my tears shall never cease to flow :
For thee at once I from the world retire,
To feed in silent shades a hopeless fire.

My bosom all thy image shall retain,
The full impression there shall still remain.
As thou hast taught my constant heart to prove
The noblest height and elegance of love ;
That sacred passion I to thee confine,
My spotless faith shall be for ever thine.

The exquisite grief and affliction Mrs. Rowe felt for his loss is described with such beautiful and unaffected eloquence in this poem and several of her letters, which have also been published, that I shall only add on this subject, that she continued to the last moments of her life to express the highest veneration and affection to his memory, and a particular regard and esteem for his relations, several of whom she honoured with a long and most intimate friendship. It was also but a short time before her death, she showed how incapable she was of forgetting him, by shedding fresh tears on occasion of the mention of his name.

It was only out of regard to Mr. Rowe, that with his society she was willing to bear London during the winter season ; and as soon after his decease as her affairs would permit, she indulged her unconquerable inclinations to solitude, by retiring to Frome in Somersetshire, in the neighbourhood of which place the greater part of her estate lay. When she forsook the town, she determined to return to it no more, but to conceal the remainder of her life in an absolute retirement ; yet on some few occasions she

thought it her duty to violate this resolution. In compliance with the importunate requests of the Honourable Mrs. Thynne, she passed some months with her at London, after the death of her daughter the Lady Brooke; and on the melancholy occasion of the decease of Mrs. Thynne herself, she could not dispute the commands of the Countess of Hertford, who earnestly desired her to reside some time with her at Marlborough, to soften, by her conversation and friendship, the severe affliction of the loss of so excellent a mother: and I think, once or twice more, the power this last illustrious lady had over Mrs. Rowe drew her, by an obliging kind of violence, to spend a few months with her at some of the Earl of Hertford's seats in the country. Yet even on these occasions she never quitted her retreat without very sincere regret; and always returned to it again as soon as ever she could, with decency, disengage herself from the importunity of her noble friends.

It was in this recess that she composed the most celebrated of her works,* "Friendship in Death," and the several parts of the "Letters, Moral and Entertaining." "The drift of the Letters from the

* The dates of these several pieces are as follows:—"Friendship in Death, in twenty Letters from the Dead to the Living," 1728; "Letters, Moral and Entertaining, in Prose and Verse," Part I., 1729; Part II., 1731; Part III., 1733.

Dead is," as the ingenious author of the preface expresses it, "to impress the notion of the soul's immortality, without which all virtue and religion, with their temporal and eternal good consequences, must fall to the ground; and to make the mind familiar with the thoughts of our future existence, and contract, as it were, an habitual persuasion of it, by writings built on that foundation, and addressed to the affections and imagination." It may also be added, that' the design both of these, and the "Letters Moral and Entertaining," is, by fictitious examples of the most generous benevolence and heroic virtue, to allure the reader to the practice of every thing that ennobles human nature, and benefits the world; and by just and lively images of the sharp remorse and real misery that attend the false and unworthy satisfactions of vice, to warn the young and unthinking from being seduced by the enchanting name of pleasure to inevitable ruin; the piety of which design is the more worthy of the highest panegyrics, as it is so uncommon. The greater part of the poets of our country have apparently employed all their wit and art to disguise the native deformity of vice, and strew flowers on the paths to perdition. But this excellent lady (as was observed of an eminent genius of the last age*) "possessed so much strength and firmness of mind, and such a perfect

* Mr. Cowley.

piety and goodness, as could not be perverted by the largeness of her wit, and was proof against the art of poetry itself." The elegant Letters which gave occasion to remark this distinction in Mrs. Rowe's character as a polite writer, are not only chaste and innocent, but greatly subservient to the interest of heaven, and evidently designed, by representing virtue in all her genuine beauty, to recommend her to the choice and admiration of mankind.

In the year 1736 the importunity of some of Mrs. Rowe's acquaintance, who had seen the "History of Joseph" in manuscript, prevailed on her (though not without real reluctance) to suffer it to be made public. She wrote this piece in her younger years, and, when first printed, had carried it on no farther than the marriage of the hero of the poem; but at the request of her friends (particularly of an illustrious lady,* to whom she could scarce refuse any thing) that the relation might include Joseph's discovery of himself to his brethren, she added two other books, the composing of which, I am informed, was no more than the labour of three or four days. This additional part, which was her last work, was published but a few weeks before her death.

This event, to prepare for which she had made so much the business of her life, befell her, accord-

* The Countess of Hertford.

ing to her wish, in her beloved recess. She was favoured with an uncommon strength of constitution, and had passed a long series of years with scarcely any indisposition severe enough to confine her to her bed. But about half a year before her decease, she was attacked with a distemper, which seemed to herself, as well as others, attended with danger. Though this disorder (as she expressed herself to one of her most intimate friends) found her mind not quite so serene, and prepared to meet death, as usual; yet by a renewed application to the atonement and mediation of our blessed Redeemer, she experienced such divine satisfaction and transport, that she said, with tears of joy, she knew not that she had ever felt the like in all her life; and she repeated, on this occasion, Mr. Pope's verses, entitled, "The Dying Christian to his Soul," with an air of such intense pleasure, as evidenced that she really felt all the elevated sentiments of pious ecstasy and triumph which breathe in that exquisite piece of sacred poetry. After this threatening illness, Mrs. Rowe recovered her usual good state of health; and though at the time of her decease she was pretty far advanced in age, yet her exact temperance, and the calmness of her mind, undisturbed with uneasy cares and passions, encouraged her friends to flatter themselves with a much longer enjoyment of so valuable a life, than it pleased heaven to allow them. On the day on which she was

seized with that distemper* which in a few hours proved mortal, she seemed to those about her to be in perfect health and vigour. In the evening of it, at about eight o'clock, she conversed with a friend with all her wonted vivacity; after which she retired to her chamber. At about ten, her servant hearing some noise in her mistress's room, ran instantly into it, and found her fallen off the chair on the floor, speechless, and in the agonies of death. She had the immediate assistance of a Physician and Surgeon, but all the means used were without success; and after having given one groan, she expired a few minutes before two o'clock, on Sunday morning, February 20th, 1736-7. Her disease was judged to be an apoplexy. A pious book was found lying open by her, as also some loose papers, on which she had written the following unconnected sentences:—

“ O guide, and counsel, and protect my soul from sin !
O speak, and let me know thy heavenly will,
Speak evidently to my list'ning soul !
O fill my soul with love, and light, and peace,
And whisper heavenly comfort to my soul !
O speak, celestial Spirit, in the strain
Of love and heavenly pleasure to my soul ! ”

Thus it appeared, that in reading pious meditations, or forming devout ejaculations for

* Saturday, Feb. 19th, a day which she had set apart to employ a large portion of it in extraordinary devotion.

the divine favour and assistance, Mrs. Rowe made the last use of the powers of reason below the skies.

As she was greatly apprehensive that the violence of pain, or languors of a sick bed, might occasion some depression of spirits and melancholy fears, unsuitable to the character and expectations of a Christian, her manuscript book of devotions contains frequent petitions to heaven, that she might not, in this manner, dishonour her profession; and to her friends she often expressed herself desirous of a sudden removal to the skies, as it must necessarily prevent any such indecent behaviour in her last moments: so that the suddenness of Mrs. Rowe's death may be interpreted as a reward of her singular piety, and a mark of the divine favour in answer to her prayers. Indeed, (to borrow Mr. Grove's expressions in a letter written to a friend, soon after this lady's decease,) "though her death be universally lamented, yet the manner of it is rather to be esteemed a part of her happiness. One moment to enjoy this life, the next, or after a pause we are not sensible of, to find ourselves got beyond not only the fears of death, but death itself; and in possession of everlasting life, and health, and pleasure: this moment to be devoutly addressing ourselves to God, or employed in delightful meditations on his perfections; the next in his presence, and surrounded with scenes

of bliss perfectly new, and unspeakably joyous ; is a way of departing out of life to be desired, not dreaded, by ourselves, and felicitated, not condoled, by our surviving friends. When all things are in a readiness for our removal out of the world, it is a privilege to be spared the sad ceremony of parting, and all the pains and struggles of feeble nature."

Mrs. Rowe seemed, by the cheerfulness of her temper, to be peculiarly fitted to enjoy life, and all its innocent satisfactions ; yet, instead of any excessive fondness for things present and visible, her contempt for what she used to term a low state of existence, and a dull round of insipid pleasures, and the ardour with which she breathed after the divine enjoyments of a future world, were inconceivably great. When her acquaintance expressed to her the joy they felt at seeing her look so well, and possessed of so much health as promised many years to come, she was wont to reply, "that it was the same as telling a slave his fetters were like to be lasting ; or complimenting him on the strength of the walls of his dungeon." And the fervour of her wishes to commence the life of angels, irresistibly broke from her lips in numberless other instances. This satiety of all things beneath the skies, and impatience after the perfect fruition of God, might, perhaps, be the occasion, that in several periods of her life she had flattered herself that

she was near that blessed state on which she had fixed all her hopes. And in particular, a little time before her death, she expressed to several of her friends her firm persuasion that her continuance on earth would be very short ; but without assigning any peculiar reason for this opinion. I would not presume to lay any stress on such supposed presages ; but as they have already been related to the public, I thought it not proper to omit all mention of them.

She was buried, according to her request, under the same stone with her father in the meeting-place at Frome ; on which occasion her funeral sermon was preached to a very crowded auditory, by the Rev. Mr. Bowden. Her death was lamented with very uncommon and remarkable sorrow, by all who had heard of her virtue and merit ; but particularly by those of the town where she had so long resided, and her most intimate acquaintance. Above all, the news of her death touched the poor and distressed with inexpressible affliction ; and at her doors, and over her grave, they bewailed the loss of their benefactor, poured blessings on her memory, and recounted to each other the gentle and condescending manner with which she heard their requests, and the numerous instances in which they had experienced her unexampled goodness and bounty.

In Mrs. Rowe's cabinet were found the follow-

ing letters to several of her friends, for whom she had a high esteem and affection, which she had ordered to be delivered to the persons to whom they were directed, immediately after her decease ; and by their obliging permission I communicate them to the public :—

TO THE COUNTESS OF HERTFORD.

“MADAM,

“THIS is the last letter you will ever receive from me ; the last assurance I shall give you, on earth, of a sincere and steadfast friendship. But when we meet again, I hope it will be in the heights of immortal love and ecstasy. Mine, perhaps, may be the first glad spirit to congratulate your safe arrival on the happy shores. Heaven can witness how sincere my concern for your happiness is : thither I have sent my ardent wishes, that you may be secured from the flattering delusions of the world ; and after your pious example has been long a blessing to mankind, may you calmly resign your breath, and enter the confines of unmolested joy.

“I am now taking my farewell of you here, but it is a short adieu ; for I die with full persuasion that we shall soon meet again. But O ! in what elevation of happiness, in what enlargement of mind, and perfection of every faculty ! What transporting reflections shall we make on the advantages of which we shall find ourselves eter-

nally possessed. To Him that loved, and washed us in his blood, we shall ascribe immortal glory, dominion, and praise for ever.

“This is all my salvation, and all my hope. That name in whom the Gentiles trust, in whom all the family on earth are blessed, is now my glorious, my unfailing confidence; in his merits alone I expect to stand justified before infinite purity and justice. How poor were my hopes, if I depended on those works which my own vanity, or the partiality of men, have called ‘good;’ and which, examined by divine purity, would prove, perhaps, but specious sins! The best actions of my life would be found defective, if brought to the test of that unblemished holiness, in whose sight the heavens are not clean. Where were my hopes, but for a Redeemer’s merits and atonement! how desperate, how undone my condition! With the utmost advantages I can boast, I should start back and tremble at the thoughts of appearing before the unblemished majesty. O Jesus, what harmony dwells in thy name! Celestial joy and immortal life is in the sound! Let angels set thee to their golden harps; let the ransomed nations for ever magnify thee.

“What a dream is mortal life! what shadows are the objects of sense! All the glories of mortality, my much-loved friend, will be nothing in your view, at the awful hour of death; when you must be separated from the whole creation,

and enter on the borders of the immaterial world.

“Something persuades me this will be my last farewell in this world: heaven forbid that it should be an everlasting parting! May that divine protection, whose care I implore, keep you steadfast in the faith of Christianity, and guide your steps in the strictest paths of virtue!

“Adieu, my most dear friend, till we meet in the paradise of God.

“ELIZABETH ROWE.”

TO THE EARL OF ORRERY.

“MY LORD,

“THERE seems to be something presaging in the message you ordered me to deliver to your charming Henrietta, when I met her gentle spirit in the blissful regions, which I believe will be very soon. I am now acting the last part of life, and composing myself to meet the universal terror with a fortitude becoming the principles of Christianity. It is only through the great Redeemer’s merits and atonement, that I hope to pass undaunted through the fatal darkness.

‘Before him death, the grisly tyrant, flies,
He wipes the tears for ever from our eyes.’

“All human greatness makes no figure to my present apprehension: every distinction vanishes but those of virtue and real holiness. It is this

which gives a peculiar regard for such a character as yours, and gives me hopes your example will not fall short of those of your illustrious ancestors. The approaches of death set the world in a true light: its brightest advantages appear no more than a dream, in that solemn period. The immortal mind, perhaps, will quit a cottage with less regret than it would leave the splendour of a palace; and the breathless dust sleep as quietly beneath the grassy turf, as under the parade of a costly monument. These are insignificant circumstances to a spirit doomed to an endless duration of misery or bliss. It is this important concern, my Lord, that has induced me to spend my time in a peaceful retirement, rather than to waste it in a train of thoughtless amusements. My thoughts are grown familiar with the solemnity of dying; and death seems to advance, not as an inflexible tyrant, but as the peaceful messenger of liberty and happiness. May I make my exit in that elate manner, those charming lines of Mr. Pope describe:

‘ The world recedes, it disappears ;
Heaven opens on my eyes, my ears
With sounds seraphic ring :
Lend, lend your wings ! I mount ! I fly !
O grave ! where is thy victory ?
O death ! where is thy sting ? ’

“ The nearer I am approaching to immortality, the more extensive and enlarged I find the prin-

ciples of amity and good-will in my soul : from hence arise the most sincere wishes for your happiness, and of the charming pledges your lovely Henrietta left. O ! my Lord, if you would discharge the sacred trust, keep them under your own inspection.

“This will not reach you, my Lord, till I am past the ceremony of subscribing,

“Your humble servant,

“ELIZABETH ROWE.”

TO MR. JAMES THEOBALD.

“SIR,

“THE converse I have had with you has been very short ; but I hope the friendship begun by it will be transmitted to the regions of perfect amity and bliss. It would not be worth the while to cherish the impressions of a virtuous friendship, if the generous engagement was to be dissolved with mortal life : such a thought would give the grave a deeper gloom, and add new horrors to the fatal darkness.

“But I confess I have brighter expectations, and am fully persuaded those noble attachments that are founded on real merit are of an immortal date. That benignity, that divine charity, which just warms the soul in these cold regions, will shine with new lustre, and burn with an eternal ardour, in the happy seats of peace and love.

“My present experience confirms me in this truth : the powers of nature are drooping, the vital spark grows languid and faint ; while my affection for my surviving friends was never more warm, my concern for their happiness was never more ardent and sincere.

“This makes me employ some of the last part of my time in writing to three or four persons, whose merit requires my esteem, in hopes this solemn farewell will leave a serious impression on their minds.

“I am going to act the last and most important part of human life : in a little time I shall land on the immortal coasts, where all is new, amazing, and unknown. But, however gloomy the passage appears,

‘ Sweet fields, beyond the swelling flood,
Stand dress’d in living green :
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
While Jordan roll’d between.’

DR. WATTS.

“Nature cannot but shiver on the fatal brinks, unwilling to try the grand experiment, whilst the hopes of Christianity can alone support the soul in this solemn crisis. In this exigence the eternal Spirit whispers peace and pardon to the dying saint, through the atonement, and brightens the shadow of death with some glimmering of immortal light.

“Tell Mrs. Theobald, I hope to meet her in the shining realms of love and unmingled bliss ;

‘ Where crown’d with joy, and ever-blooming youth,
The jocund hours dance on their endless round.’

“ELIZABETH ROWE.”

TO MRS. SARAH ROWE.

“MY DEAR MOTHER,

“I AM now taking my final adieu of this world, in certain hopes of meeting you in the next. I carry to my grave my affection and gratitude to your family, and leave you with the sincerest concern for your own happiness, and the welfare of your family. May my prayers be answered, when I am sleeping in the dust ! O may the angels of God conduct you in the paths of immortal glory and pleasure ! I would collect the powers of my soul, and ask blessings for you with all the holy violence of prayer. God Almighty, the God of your pious ancestors, who has been your dwelling-place for many generations, bless you !

“It is but a short space I have to measure ; the shadows are lengthening, and my sun declining. That goodness which has hitherto conducted me will not fail me in the last concluding act of life ; that name which I have made my glory and my boast, shall then be my strength and my salvation. To meet death with a becoming fortitude,

is a part above the powers of nature, and which I can perform by no power or holiness of my own ; for, O ! in my best estate I am altogether vanity ; a wretched, helpless sinner : but in the merits and perfect righteousness of God my Saviour, I hope to appear justified at the supreme tribunal, where I must shortly stand to be judged.

“ELIZABETH ROWE.”

After Mrs. Rowe's death, agreeably to her request, Dr. Watts revised and published her devotions, under the title of “Devout Exercises of the Heart,” &c. ; in which, if some expressions (as the ingenious editor observes, and Mrs. Rowe herself was not insensible*) may seem a little too rapturous ; a just regard to the sex and particular genius of the author will, I hope, prevail for a gentle censure. It could scarcely be expected that a lady should be versed in the arts of strict reasoning ; and it ought to be easily forgiven, if she wrote on religious subjects, even in prose, rather with the fire and bold license of a poet, than the accuracy of a Divine and a philo-

* In a letter to a lady to whom she sent one of these sacred meditations, she thus expresses herself: “You will find by the enclosed, how my thoughts were employed in the little fit of sickness which lately confined me. There is, I confess, something so glittering and romantic in this description of a future state, that I am afraid you will think I have been reading the Alcoran, and am become a proselyte to the Turkish religion.”

sopher. It may also be added, that many of these exercises of piety were the productions of youth; and at least part of them at first composed only to assist her own private devotion, and improvement in virtue, though she afterwards thought fit to order them for public view after her decease, in pursuance of the following vow:—

“ April 20th, 1735.

“ MY father’s God, if thou wilt now speedily deliver me, and send me an answer of peace, then I will record thy several mercies, and leave the catalogue as a testimony of thy truth, and a seal to the veracity of the Scripture promises; and leave it with a charge to be published to thy honour at my death, that ages yet unborn may rise up and bless thee, and trust in thy word.”

CHAPTER III.

As Mrs. Rowe passed her days in almost perpetual retirement, the fewness of the facts related in these memoirs will not, I hope, appear surprising. Her “life was not varied with accidents to divert the reader. It was more pleasant for herself to live, than for an historian to describe.”* So that being an uniform course of

* Mr. Dryden’s expressions concerning Plutarch.

devotion, benevolence, and indifference to the separate interests and pleasures of the animal life, and of ardour in pursuing the perfect and divine felicity of heaven and immortality; when you have the history of one week, you have the history of the whole. This occasions her character being so much longer than the historical part; her character, which only represents what she was every day, and which could not be shortened without injustice to her and the world.

I shall not attempt to give a character of Mrs. Rowe's works, since the number of their editions, and the approbation and applause they have received from some of the best judges, and most celebrated writers of the age, may seem to render any farther panegyric superfluous. I will only add, that her exquisite wit, and delicate imagination, were scarcely any thing indebted to the assistance of art or labour; and Mr. Prior, who in the preface to his poems has done justice to the fineness of her genius, might, with equal truth, have applied to her what he has so beautifully said of an eminent wit of the last age.* "Such were the natural faculties and strength of her mind, that she had occasion to borrow very little from education; and she owed those advantages to her own good parts which others acquire by study and imitation. Wit, in most writers, is like a

* The Earl of Dorset. See Prior's dedication of his Poems.

fountain in a garden, supplied by several streams, brought through artful pipes, and playing sometimes agreeably : but Mrs. Rowe's was a source arising from the top of a mountain, which forced its own way, and with inexhaustible supplies delighted and enriched the country through which it passed." She read no critics, nor could her genius brook the discipline of rules : and as the pains of correcting appeared to her some kind of drudgery, she seldom made any great alterations in her composures from what they were when she first gave copies of them to her friends. For she did not set so high a value on her works, as to employ much labour in finishing them with the utmost accuracy ; and she wrote verses through inclination, and rather as an amusement, than as a study and profession, to excel in which she should make the business of her life.

Mrs. Rowe was of a moderate stature, her hair of a fine auburn colour, and her eyes of a darkish grey, inclining to blue, and full of fire. Her complexion was very fair, and a natural rosy blush glowed in her cheeks. She spoke gracefully, and her voice was exceeding sweet and harmonious, and perfectly suited to that gentle language which always flowed from her lips. But the softness and benevolence of her aspect is beyond all description. It inspired irresistible love, yet not without some mixture of that awe and veneration which distinguished sense and

virtue, apparent in the countenance, are wont to create.

Her acquaintance with the great had taught her all the accomplishments of good breeding, and complacency of behaviour ; and without formality or affectation, she practised, in a distant solitude, all the address and politeness of a court ; but she learned no more than the real elegancies of grandeur. She was very remote from extravagance in habit, and seemed to have perfectly subdued the love of the vain show of life ; in which she may be thought to discover an elevation of soul superior to the natural inclinations of her sex, and great strength of virtue in resisting the general example of the age in which she lived. The labours of the toilette consumed very little of her time : she justly despised the arts of dress and ornament, and endeavoured to infuse the same contempt of them into all her acquaintance ; yet without falling into the other extreme of indecent negligence.

The love of solitude, which seems almost inseparable from a poetic genius, discovered itself very early in Mrs. Rowe, and never forsook her but with life itself. Before her marriage, though it cannot be doubted that she was often solicited to quit her beloved obscurity, yet she had only made a short visit to the town of a few weeks. After Mr. Rowe's decease, as a decent retreat seemed to her alone suited to a state of widow-

hood, her aversion to a public appearance in the world increased; and the approach of the decline of life determined her more strongly to devote the remainder of her days to retirement; nor could any arguments, or persuasions of her friends, prevail with Mrs. Rowe to alter her sentiments and conduct in this instance. This resolution was unhappy for the world, as it deprived them of the knowledge of so fair a pattern of piety and goodness, and ought not to be proposed to the imitation of the virtuous part of mankind. For, as a celebrated writer says, * “the good ought not to be allowed to forsake the world, unless the bad had the same moderation, and were willing to follow them into the wilderness.” Nor did Mrs. Rowe recommend such a conduct to others; for she thus expresses her sentiments on this subject, in a letter to a friend, which she wrote about three weeks before her death:—“It is an injury to mankind, to wish you had been born to a life of repose and leisure: there are too few examples of generosity and justice in the world, to wish any person of good character concealed. There are, indeed, a set of insignificant and profligate mortals, who, if they should take it into their heads to elope from mankind, and run wild in the woods, the public would be so far from being detrimented, that they would be highly obliged by it; that so those only who are a grace to human nature, might

* Dr. Sprat, *Life of Cowley*, page 38.

appear in active and public stations." "I do not," says she, in a letter to another friend, "affect any recluse notions of religion: my thoughts of that are just the reverse, and all easy and sociable." Upon the whole, it may be said with the greatest truth, in defence of Mrs. Rowe's retreat, that she did not fly to deserts that she might wholly resign herself to sloth, and a monastic kind of devotion, unprofitable to the world; but amidst the silence and quiet of solitude, she employed no small part of her time in actions of munificence and charity; or in composing those works with which she has obliged the public, which, as they inspire the noblest sentiments of benevolence and piety, may be of the most lasting and extensive benefit to mankind.

It has been imputed to persons of recluse and ascetic lives, that though their austere virtue may preserve them from sensual indulgences, against which they are wont to express the utmost severity; yet they are too frequently apt to soothe themselves in pride, ill-nature, censoriousness, and the like hateful dispositions of the mind. The lustre of Mrs. Rowe's character was not sullied by so great a blemish. She was as exemplary for every social and good-natured virtue, as for the exact sanctity of her manners; and justly thought the sins to which the soul is tempted by its union with the body, attended with less degrees of guilt than those of other vices of a graver

sort, which, she believed, debased human nature into a nearer resemblance to that most evil and malevolent spirit, who is represented, in the sacred writings, as perfectly opposite to the benignity of the supreme Being.

She had the happiest command over her passions, and maintained a constant calmness of temper, and sweetness of disposition, that could not be ruffled with adverse accidents, nor soured by the approach of old age itself. It has been questioned whether she was ever angry in her whole life ; at least with regard to those little misfortunes, and displeasing incidents, that occur in common life, which, though really of a trivial nature, frequently prove too strong temptations to indecencies of passion : she was only wont to turn these into subjects of mirth, and agreeable raillery. And as persons are apt to be least on their guard against excesses of this kind towards inferiors and domestics, it ought to be observed, that her servant who lived with her near twenty years, scarcely ever discovered in her mistress any tendency to anger towards herself, or any warmth of resentment against others, except in the cause of heaven, against great impiety, and flagrant crimes ; on which occasions, some degree of indignation is not only irreproachable, but truly deserves the name of commendable and virtuous zeal.

The uncommon praise that is given to Mr.

Cowley, by the author of his Life, "that no one had reason to wish his wit less," is equally due to Mrs. Rowe: for, together with the most manly genius, she possessed all that gentleness and softness of disposition, which gives her own lovely sex such irresistible charms; and was entirely free from that severity of temper which has made the character of a wit unamiable, if not quite infamous.* Next to lewd and profane writings, she expressed the strongest aversion to satire, as it is usually so replete with personal malice and invective. No strokes of this kind can be found in her works; and her conversation was not less innocent of every appearance of ill-nature, than her writings. She fortified her resolutions against evil speaking, by particular and solemn vows, as appears by the following sacred engagement, transcribed from her manuscript:—

"October 6th, 1726.

"O LET me once again bind myself to the Lord, never, by his grace, to speak evil of any person. O help me to govern my tongue by the strictest rules of charity and truth, and never to utter any evil surmises, or make the least reflection on the honour of my neighbour. Let me, in the minutest circumstance, do to others as I would they should act to me. Let me hope, let me believe all things to the advantage of others. Give me

"As much detested as a wit."—DR. YOUNG.

thy divine assistance to perform this great duty, and set thou a watch on my words ; and keep, O strictly keep the door of my lips, that I offend not with my tongue. Now let thy grace be sufficient for me, and thy strength be manifest in my weakness. In thy strength, in the name of the Lord my Redeemer, let me engage with all my future temptations. Look graciously on this petition, and remember me when I am in any suspense, any exigence, or am ready to forget my engagements. In the moments that I shall waver, strengthen me ; restrain me when the malignant thought arises ; and while the yet unuttered words are ready to issue from my lips, set thou thy bridle there, and govern my rebellious faculty."

Mrs. Rowe strictly regulated her conduct by this solemn vow, and could hardly think any occasion would justify the reporting what was prejudicial to the reputation of another. "I can appeal to you," says she, in a letter to a lady who had been long and intimately acquainted with her, "if you ever knew me make an envious or an ill-natured reflection on any person upon earth. Indeed, the follies of mankind would afford a wide and various scene ; but charity would draw a veil of darkness here, and choose to be for ever silent, rather than expatiate on the melancholy theme." Scandal and detraction appeared to her

extreme inhumanity, which no charms of wit and politeness could make tolerable. If she was forced to be present at such kind of conversation, she had sometimes (when the freedom might be decently used) the courage openly to condemn it ; and, I think, always the generosity to undertake the defence of the absent, when unjustly accused, and to extenuate even their real faults and errors.

She was as unacquainted with envy, as if it had been impossible for so base a passion to enter into the human mind ; and was always forward to do justice to every fine writer and illustrious character of the age. She exceedingly loved to praise, and never failed to observe and applaud every appearance of merit in those with whom she was acquainted ; but overlooked all their frailties with more than even the usual partiality of friendship. Yet though she could have wished to have made no other use of speech than to commend worth and virtue, on some occasions a sense of duty compelled her to reprove ; but the seeming severity of this virtue was tempered by the softest arts of gentleness and goodness. In proof of which, it may not be improper to add the following instance of the honest artifices she used to disguise her admonitions. She has been frequently observed to commend persons of distinguished eminence for one kind of moral worth, before some of her friends, who were deficient in that particular virtue, in hopes they might be

struck with the beauty of the example which she proposed to their imitation, in a manner so little apt to give offence.

She had few equals in her excellent turn for conversation. Her wit was inexhaustible, and she expressed her thoughts in the most beautiful and flowing eloquence ; and as these uncommon advantages were accompanied with an easy goodness, and unaffected openness of behaviour, she infinitely charmed all who knew her. A peculiar elevation of understanding made her despise those trifles which usually dwell on the lips of the fair sex, and she would always have chosen to talk on important and instructive themes ; yet, lest constant discourse of a serious kind should prove distasteful and wearisome, she sometimes entertained her friends on more gay and indifferent subjects. But as soon as it could be done without the appearance of affectation, she returned to her favourite topics, on which she exerted all her exquisite talents, to recommend the most exact morality and sublime piety ; so that it seemed impossible to be in her company without growing wiser and better, or to leave it without regret.

Mrs. Rowe's wit, beauty, and merit, had even from her youth conciliated to her much compliment and praise, and from such judges of worth as might have made some degree of vanity seem almost pardonable in a lady and an author. Yet,

amidst these temptations to pride, she retained all the humility of the meanest and most obscure person of the human race. She rarely mentioned any of her writings, even to her most intimate friends ; nor ever discovered the least elation of mind at their great success, and the approbation they received from some of the finest writers of the age. The praises with which her works were honoured, only led her to ascribe the glory to the Original of all perfection, on whose power she maintained a constant sense of her dependence, and with the most grateful piety owned her obligations to his goodness. "It is but for heaven," said she, "to give a turn to one of my nerves, and I should be an idiot." She was exquisitely sensible of her own defects, and the frailty inseparable from our nature. "How small a part," she was wont to say, "is there in human actions, that merits the name of goodness, when they are separated from the selfishness, pride, and vanity that attend them ! The bare levity of our spirits in devotion is enough to condemn us, when we consider what an holy being God is, how spotless in his perfections, and how infinite in his majesty." She assumed no indecent share in conversation, and has been frequently known to be silent on subjects she well understood, and on which she could have displayed her wit to great advantage. Her friends could not fail to observe the modest care she used in avoiding the mention of

any thing that might tend to her own honour : nor can I, during the long intimacy with which she favoured me, remember one expression of vanity, or sense of her own worth, that might seem to stain her humility. She never dictated to others, nor arrogated any respect and deference to her own sentiments ; but in conversing with persons of parts and abilities, far beneath her own, seemed to study to make the superiority of her genius easy to them, by the most obliging goodness and condescension of behaviour. Nor were her affability and readiness of access, to those of the lowest rank, less remarkable and exemplary. It was impossible for her to treat any one with insolence and contempt. On the contrary, as she infinitely loved and revered true goodness, I have been witness of the real and peculiar respect she paid to sincere piety, when great degrees of ignorance, and extremely mean circumstances, might have quite obscured it to less humble and generous minds.

She was perfectly untainted with that love of pleasure which has so universally corrupted the present age, and is justly thought to have the most unfriendly influence on the noblest kinds of virtue. She was ignorant of every polite and fashionable game. Play, she believed at best, was but an art of losing time, and forgetting to think ; but when she reflected on the fatal consequences that attend a fond attachment to this

diversion, she had even an horror for it. Her taste was too refined and delicate to relish those insipid trifles, called novels and romances, usually as defective in wit, and true imitation of nature, as replete with indecent images, which pollute the imagination, and shock every chaste mind. She would have esteemed the diversions of the English theatre (especially those of the tragic kind) capable of affording rational pleasure, if she could have believed that they were innocent; but so few of them appeared to her inoffensive to virtue, that she thought fit to abstain from those entertainments, which, in her opinion, generally tended to promote impurity of manners, and expose piety to scorn and ridicule. The native grandeur of her soul preserved her from a fondness for any kind of luxury, judging it much beneath the dignity of a being possessed of reason, and born for immortality. She was always pleased with whatever she found on her table; and neither the nature of her food, nor the manner of dressing it, gave her any uneasiness: for if in either of these respects it was not perfectly agreeable, it only afforded her a subject of wit and pleasantry, instead of occasioning any disgust or serious resentment. She mixed in no parties of pleasure, and extremely despised the trivial and uninteresting conversation of formal visits, which she avoided, at least as much as decency would allow; and, indeed, except drawing, she

had almost an equal contempt for every thing that bears the name of diversion and amusement, even of the most innocent kind. But, I confess, this part of the character of this excellent lady may not be so fit for general imitation. For though the constant vivacity and cheerfulness of Mrs. Rowe's natural temper might possibly seem to set her above the necessity of allowing herself proper intervals of amusement to relax the mind, yet such great abstinence from every kind of recreation might, in most persons, tend to sour the mind with austere and unamiable dispositions; or, at least, to depress the spirits to such a degree of melancholy, as would unfit them for the necessary duties and offices of life.

She had a contempt of riches that has been rarely equalled, and which, I believe, may be looked upon as a certain mark of a truly great mind. As she expressed herself much pleased with the moderate fortune allotted her by the divine providence, which afforded her ease and plenty to the extent of her wishes, so she never pursued any designs to advance her circumstances in life. She could not be persuaded to publish her works by subscription, or even to accept the advantageous terms offered by the bookseller, if she would permit her scattered pieces to be collected and published together. She wrote no dedications to the great, and the name of no Minister of State is to be found in

her works. She never saw a court ; and if she has mentioned, with honour, some of the Princes under whose reigns she lived, it was only from a sincere veneration for the fautors of liberty, (which inestimable blessing she highly valued,) and without the least expectation of any reward, beyond the pleasure of discovering her gratitude to those who appeared to her, public benefactors to their country. The high esteem she expressed for some of her friends of distinguished rank, was equally free from the suspicion of interested views : for as she gained nothing by their friendship but the happiness of their conversation and an acquaintance with their virtues ; the praises she gave them ought, in justice, to be looked on as the incense due to merit. The love of money she thought the most sordid and ignoble of passions, and frequently lamented its general prevalence over the human mind. She did not know her own estates from others, till some motives of prudence obliged her to inform herself, when she apprehended she was soon to leave them ; and was so far from that rigour in exacting her due, which approaches to inhumanity, that her neglect of her interest may rather be censured as excessive : she let her estates beneath their intrinsic value, as appears by the considerable advance of the rents since her decease ; and was so gentle to her tenants, that she not only had no lawsuit with any of them, but would not so much as

suffer them to be threatened with the seizure of their goods, on the neglect of the payment of their rents. When one of them, who owed her an hundred pounds, carried off all his stock in the night, she could not be prevailed upon to embrace an opportunity in her power of seizing it afterwards ; and if he had not, in this manner, quitted the estate upon receiving some just menaces without her knowledge, it is more than probable that her excess of goodness would have always prevented her from having recourse to rigorous methods to eject him, and compel him to do her justice. It would be easy to add several other instances highly prejudicial to her interest, in which she voluntarily departed from her right, when she had the highest claim of equity. She could scarcely bear the mention of injustice without trembling ; and the tenderness and delicacy of her conscience, with regard to this sin, was so great, that she hardly thought she could keep far enough from it. "I can appeal to thee," says she in an address to God, "how scrupulously I have acted in matters of equity, and how willingly I have injured myself to right others." She spoke with much warmth of the extreme danger of any dishonest and fraudulent practice ; and expressed her wonder how persons could die with any repose of mind, under the least degree of such kind of guilt.

Her indifference to glory was scarcely less

remarkable. As she seemed to shun fame by concealing herself, during almost the whole of her life, in an obscure solitude, so she practised no arts to promote her reputation. She wrote no preface to any of her works to prepossess the public in their favour, nor suffered them to be accompanied with panegyrics of her friends. She would not, indeed, so much as allow her name to be prefixed to any of them, except some few poems in the earlier part of her life: and though this was the occasion that a beautiful pastoral of hers was ascribed to another hand, she would not alter the modesty of her conduct. When she intended to communicate to the world "Friendship in Death," the most celebrated of her works, she showed the manuscript to no more than one person, on whose secrecy she could rely; and after he had, by her order, copied it in his own hand, she sent it to Dr. Young, only knowing him by his works, and inscribed his name to the dedication, in hopes that being published by him, and appearing under the patronage of his name, all her acquaintance would imagine this piece to be written by some friend of that eminent poet. And when the inimitable beauties of Mrs. Rowe's manner of writing discovered the true author, and this performance began to be universally admired, she still continued to avoid owning it, as far as was consistent with a strict regard to truth: she even

declined the honour due to her ashes and memory after death; for when she selected from her manuscript volume of devotions some exercises of piety, with a view to their publication after her decease, she studiously omitted those parts that would have discovered her unexampled charity, and other virtues which conciliate the esteem and veneration of the world: nor could any thing, perhaps, but the suddenness of her death, have prevented her committing to the flames the book I have just mentioned, which has so often assisted me in my attempt to do justice to her character. And as she entrusted the care of her posthumous pieces to one who she could not be insensible had never entertained a thought of being an author, and whose incurable want of health must render him peculiarly unfit to compose any thing for public view, there is the highest probability that it was her intention that this collection of her remains should be communicated to the world without any account of her life and character; which, through extreme humility, she judged unworthy the knowledge and imitation of posterity. The same modest disposition of mind appears in the orders that she left in writing to her servant; in which, after having desired that her funeral might be by night, and attended only by a small number of friends, she adds, "Charge Mr. Bowden not to say one word of me in the sermon. I

would lie in my father's grave, and have no stone nor inscription over my vile dust, which I gladly leave to oblivion and corruption, till it rise to a glorious immortality."

Mrs. Rowe was exemplary for every relative duty. Filial piety was a remarkable part of her character. She loved the best of fathers, as she ought, and repaid his uncommon care and tenderness by all just returns of duty and affection. She has been heard to say, that she could die rather than displease him; and the anguish she felt at seeing him in pain in his last sickness was so great, that it occasioned some kind of convulsion, a disorder from which she was wholly free in every other part of her life.

When she was entered into a marriage state, the highest esteem and most tender affection appeared in all her conduct to Mr. Rowe; and by the most gentle and obliging manners, and the exercise of every social and good-natured virtue, she confirmed the empire she had gained over his heart. She complied with his inclinations in several instances to which she was naturally averse; and made it her study to soften the anxieties, and heighten all the satisfactions of his life. Her capacity for superior things did not tempt her to neglect the less honourable cares which the laws of decency impose on the softer sex in the connubial relation: much less was she led by a sense of her own merit to assume any

thing to herself inconsistent with that duty and submission which the precepts of Christian piety so strictly enjoin. Mr. Rowe had some mixture of natural warmth in his temper, of which he had not always a perfect command. If at any time this broke out into some little excesses of anger, it never awaked any passion of the like kind in Mrs. Rowe; but, on the contrary, she always remained mistress of herself, and studied, by the gentlest language and most soothing endearments, to restore Mr. Rowe's mind to that calmness which reason approves. And she equally endeavoured, in every other instance, by the softest arts of persuasion, and in a manner remote from all airs of superiority, to lead Mr. Rowe on towards that perfection of virtue, to which she herself aspired with the truest Christian zeal. During his long illness, she scarce ever stirred from him a moment, and alleviated his severe affliction by performing, with inconceivable tenderness and assiduity, all the offices of compassion suited to that melancholy season. She partook his sleepless nights, and never quitted his bed, unless to serve him or watch by him. And as she could scarcely be persuaded to forsake even his breathless clay, so she consecrated her future years to his memory, by honouring his ashes with resolutions of perpetual widowhood, which with more than female constancy she inviolably maintained. Her conduct, in this last

instance, on the review of it after an interval of several years, afforded her great satisfaction ; for she thus expresses herself in a letter intended, after her own decease, to be delivered to Mrs. Marrow, if that lady had survived her : “ Whatever such distinguished sense and merit could claim, I have endeavoured to pay my much-loved husband’s memory. I reflect with pleasure on my conduct on this occasion ; not only from a principle of justice and gratitude to him, but from a consciousness of honour and love of a virtuous reputation after death. But if the soul, in a separate state, should be insensible of human censure or applause, yet there is a disinterested homage due to the sacred name of virtue.”

She mourned over the death of her husband and father, with all that becoming tenderness and sensibility which ought to touch every humane and generous heart at the loss of the dearest persons on earth ; yet her submission to the determination of divine providence was exemplary, and she never presumed to breathe any indecent murmurs against the will of heaven, which is ever just and good ; or behaved, in this hour of temptation, in a manner unsuitable to that eminent piety which appeared in every other part of her life. The following poems will show the strength of her affection for her husband, and the pious use which she made of his separation from her :—

ON THE ANNIVERSARY RETURN OF THE DAY ON
WHICH MR. ROWE DIED.

UNHAPPY day ! with what a dismal light
Dost thou appear to my afflicted sight !
In vain the cheerful spring returns with thee ;
There is no future cheerful spring for me.

While my Alexis withers in the tomb,
Untimely cropt, nor sees a second bloom,
The fairest season of the changing year
A wild and wintry aspect seems to wear ;
The flowers no more their former beauty boast,
Their painted hue and fragrant scents are lost ;
The joyous birds their harmony prolong,
But, O ! I find no music in their song.

Ye mossy caves, ye groves, and silver streams,
(The Muses' loved retreats, and gentle themes,)
Ye verdant fields, no more your landscapes please,
Nor give my soul one interval of ease ;
Tranquillity and pleasure fly your shades,
And restless care your solitude invades.
Nor the still evening, nor the rosy dawn,
Nor moonlight glimmering o'er the dewy lawn,
Nor stars, nor sun, my gloomy fancy cheer ;
But heaven and earth a dismal prospect wear :
That hour that snatch'd Alexis from my arms
Rent from the face of nature all its charms.

Unhappy day ! be sacred still to grief,
A grief too obstinate for all relief.
On thee my face shall never wear a smile,
No joy on thee shall e'er my heart beguile.
Why does thy light again my eyes molest ?
Why am I not with thee, dear youth, at rest ?
When shall I, stretch'd upon my dusty bed,
Forget the toils of life, and mingle with the dead ?

THE RESIGNATION.

'Tis done ! the darling idol I resign,
Unfit to share a heart so justly thine ;
Nor can the heavenly call unwelcome be,
That still invites my soul more near to thee ;
Thou dost but take the dying lamps away,
To bless me with thine own unmingled day.
Ye shades, ye phantoms, and ye dreams, adieu !
With smiles I now your parting glories view.
I see the hand, I worship, I adore,
And justify the great disposing power.
Divine advantage ! O immortal gain !
Why should my fond, ungrateful heart complain ?
Whate'er of beauty in his ample round
The sun surveys, in thee is brighter found ;
Whate'er the skies, in all their splendid cost,
Their beamy pride, and majesty can boast ;
Whate'er the restless mind of man desires ;
Whate'er an angel's vaster thought admires ;
In thee 'tis found in its unchanging height,
Thou first great Spring of beauty and delight !
What have I lost of excellent, or fair,
Of kind, or good, that thou can'st not repair ?
What have I lost of truth or amity,
But what derived its gentle source from thee ?
What is there here of excellence, or grace,
Which one bright smile from thee would not efface ?
At one kind look, one sparkling glance of thine,
Created pride must languish and decline.

'Tis done, at last, the great deciding part !
The world 's subdued, and thou hast all my heart :
It pants for joys which that can ne'er bestow,
And spreads itself too wide for all below ;

It leaves the vast creation far behind,
And presses forward, free and unconfined.
I see a boundless prospect still before,
And dote upon my former joys no more ;
Celestial passions kindle in my soul,
And every low, inglorious thought control.
O come ! ye sacred gusts, ye pure delights,
Ye heavenly sounds, ye intellectual sights ;
Ye gales of paradise, that lull to rest,
And fill with silent calms the peaceful breast ;
With you, transporting hopes, that boldly rise,
And swell in blissful torrents to the skies ;
That soar with angels on their splendid wings,
And search the' arcana of celestial things.
Here let me dwell, and bid the world adieu,
And still converse, ye glorious scenes, with you.
Keep far away, for ever far from hence,
Ye gaudy shows, and flattering snares of sense ;
Ye gay varieties on earth, adieu !
However soft, and pleasing to the view.
And all ye dazzling wonders of the skies,
Even you my now aspiring thoughts despise ;
No more your blandishments my heart detain,
Beauty and pleasure make their court in vain ;
Objects divine, and infinite in view,
Seize all my powers, ye fading toys, from you.
'Tis finish'd now, the great deciding part !
The world's subdued, and thou hast all my heart :
It triumphs in the change, it fixes here,
Nor needs another separation fear.
No fatal chance through endless years shall rise,
The series of my pleasures to surprise ;
No various scenes to come, no change of place,
Shall e'er thy image from my soul efface :
Nor life, nor death, nor distant height above,
Nor depths below, shall part me from thy love.

She was a gentle and kind mistress ; treating her servants with great condescension and goodness, and almost with the affability of a friend and equal. She caused due care to be taken of them when they were ill ; and did not think it misbecame her to sit by the bed of a sick servant to read to her books of piety. Her great humanity would not suffer her to be offended with light faults ; and as she never dismissed any one from her family, so, I think, none of her servants ever left her, but with a view to the changing their condition by marriage. She knew when she was well served, and reposed so much trust in those whose fidelity she had experienced, that it might seem to verge towards excess : yet, even such great confidence was hardly more than was due to that servant who was with Mrs. Rowe at the time of her death ; whose long and faithful duty to her mistress, and remarkable sorrow for her loss, deserve to be mentioned with honour.

She was a warm and generous friend ; just, if not partial, to the merit of those whom she loved, and most gentle and candid to their errors. She was always forward to do them good offices ; but in a distinguished manner she studied, with infinite art and zeal, to insinuate the love of virtue into all her acquaintance, and to promote their most important interest, by inciting them to the practice of every thing that would recommend

them to higher degrees of the divine favour. This she proposed as the best end of friendship.

CHAPTER IV.

Mrs. ROWE was not entirely free from the attacks of malice, that she might not be without opportunity to exercise the divine virtue of forgiveness ; yet one could scarce have learned from her discourse that she had an enemy ; for she was not wont to complain of any indecent conduct or injuries done to herself : so that it was apparent, such things made light impressions on her mind ; or that she had endeavoured to efface them with the happiest success.

It is a celebrated thought of the Emperor Julian, which he makes Antonine express, when he represents him, with other Roman Emperors, undergoing the scrutiny of Jupiter : when he was asked what he had done to merit an apotheosis, he replied, he had always studied to resemble the gods ; and being asked again in what he had endeavoured to be like them, he answered, “ In having as few wants as possible of my own, and doing good most extensively to others.” This is certainly a just account of a divine temper ; and this was in a great degree the temper of Mrs. Rowe : for scarce any of the human race was more sensible of the truth of that saying of

the Divine Founder of our religion, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The exercise of this god-like virtue was half the pleasure of her life; so she once expressed herself to another of her friends. Nor was this only the peculiar softness of her sex, or a natural felicity of temper, but the most virtuous desire to diffuse happiness. Her zeal to do generous actions is inexpressible; it broke out on all possible occasions; and there was not, I believe, one of her friends in any rank of life, who did not experience her beneficent disposition, by receiving from her presents of books, pictures, &c., if not gifts of higher value.

Her charities were so great, if we consider the mediocrity of her fortune, that they can scarce be paralleled, except in the histories of better times, when Christianity had all its due power over the hearts of those who professed it: they were, indeed, only limited by the utmost extent of her power; for she devoted the whole of her income, besides what was barely sufficient for the necessities of life, to the relief of the indigent and distressed. This her manuscript acquaints us with in the following vow; which, as it evidences a heart glowing with the love of God and mankind, is worthy of the highest praise: but as this solemn engagement involved Mrs. Rowe in some perplexities, it seems peculiarly fit to add, that her example ought not to influence pious minds thus to fetter themselves in things not absolutely

commanded ; since the observation of such vows may be attended with unforeseen difficulties injurious to the peace of their future lives.

“ I CONSECRATE half of my yearly income to charitable uses. And though by this, according to human appearances, I have reduced myself to some necessity, I cast all my care on that gracious God to whom I am devoted, and to whose truth I subscribe with my hand. I attest his faithfulness, and bring in my testimony to the veracity of his word ; I set to my seal that God is true ; and O, by the God of truth, I swear to perform this, and beyond this. For if thou wilt, indeed, bless me, and enlarge my coast, all that I have beyond the bare convenience and necessity of life, shall surely be the Lord's. And O grant me sufficiency, that I may abound in every good work ! O let me be the messenger of consolation to the poor ! Here I am, Lord, send me. Let me have the honour to administer to the necessities of my brethren. I am, indeed, unworthy to wipe the feet of the least of the servants of my Lord, much more unworthy of this glorious commission ; and yet, O ! send me, for thy goodness is free. Send whom thou wilt on embassies to the kings and rulers of the earth ; but let me be a servant to the servants of my Lord. Let me administer consolation and relief to the afflicted members of my exalted and glorious Redeemer.

Let this be my lot, and I give the glories of the world to the wind."

Pursuant to this sacred vow, which, as she expresses herself in another place of her manuscript, "was not made in an hour of fear and distress, but in the joy and gratitude of her soul," she not only avoided all superfluous expenses in dress and luxury, but through an excess of benevolence (if there can be any excess in such a god-like disposition) to enlarge her abilities of doing good to her fellow-creatures, she denied herself what might, in some sense, be called the real necessities of life.

Misery and indigence were a sufficient recommendation to her compassionate regard and assistance ; yet she showed a distinguished readiness to alleviate the afflictions of persons of merit and virtue : and one who had the best opportunities of making this observation assures me, that she never knew any such apply to Mrs. Rowe without success, when she had it in her power to relieve their wants. The first time she accepted of a gratification from the bookseller for any of her works, she bestowed the whole sum on a family in distress ; and there is great reason to believe that she employed all the money that she ever received on such an account in as generous a manner. And once, when she had not by her a sum of money large enough to supply the like neces-

sities of another family, she readily sold a piece of plate for this purpose. She was accustomed, on going abroad, to furnish herself with pieces of money of different value, that she might relieve any objects of compassion who should fall in her way, according to their several degrees of indigence. She contributed to some designs that had the appearance of charity, though she could not approve of them in every respect. For, she said, it was fit, sometimes, to give for the credit of religion, when other inducements were wanting, that the professors of Christianity might not be charged with covetousness; a vice which she abhorred so much, that scarce any grosser kind of immorality could more effectually exclude from her friendship. "I never," said she, "grudge any money, but when it is laid out on myself; for I consider how much it would buy for the poor." Besides the sums of money which she gave away, and the distribution of practical books on religious subjects, she employed her own hands in labours of charity to clothe the necessitous. This she did, not only for the natives of the Lower Palatinate, when they were driven from their country by the rage of war, which appeared a calamity peculiarly worthy of compassion: but it was her frequent employment to make garments of almost every kind, and bestow them on those who wanted them. She discovered a strong sense of humanity, and often showed her exqui-

site concern for the unhappy, by weeping over their misfortunes. These were the generous tears of virtue, and not any feminine weakness ; for she was rarely observed to weep at afflictions that befell herself. She was, indeed, so sensibly touched with the miseries of the poor, as not only to send her servant to examine what they stood in need of when they were sick, but often visited them in person, when they were so wretched that their houses were not fit for her to enter into, and even when they were ill of malignant and contagious distempers. One kind of munificence, in which she greatly delighted, was causing children to be taught to read and work : these she furnished with supplies of clothing, as well as Bibles, and other necessary books of instruction. This she did not only at Frome, but also at a neighbouring village, where part of her estate lay. And when she met in the streets with children of promising countenances, who were perfectly unknown to her, if, upon inquiry, it appeared that through the poverty of their parents they were not put to school, she added them to the number of those who were taught at her own expense. She condescended herself to instruct them in the plain and necessary principles and duties of religion ; and the grief she felt when any of them did not answer the hopes she had entertained, was equal to the great satisfaction she received, when it appeared that her care and

bounty had been well placed. She was also a contributor to a charitable institution of this kind at Frome, of a more public nature ; though, according to the general custom of such schools, all who were educated in it were compelled to worship God in that one particular form from which she herself took the liberty to dissent. But Mrs. Rowe was not corrupted by this example of contracted goodness, which can scarce be reconciled to that universal benevolence the Gospel enjoins : her charities were not confined to those of her own party or sentiments, but bestowed on indigent persons of almost all the sects into which Christianity is divided ; and even those whose religious opinions seemed to her of the most dangerous consequence partook largely of her bounty. Nor was her beneficence limited only to those who in strict terms might be called poor ; for, as she was wont to say, it was “ one of the greatest benefits that could be done to mankind, to free them from the cares and anxieties that attend a narrow fortune : ” in pursuance of these generous sentiments, she has been often known to make large presents to persons who were not oppressed with the last extremes of indigence. She possessed in an eminent degree the art of giving ; a nobler accomplishment than the art of enjoying, on which Horace compliments another. She knew how to heighten every favour, by the ready and obliging manner in which she conferred

it. With regard to those whose circumstances were such, that the accepting alms might have put their modesty to some pain, she studied to spare their blushes while she softened their adversity. When one such person of her acquaintance was in some distress, she contrived to convey to the indigent individual a sum of money sufficient to supply the necessity of the case, yet in such a manner that the receiver regarded the sum as justly due. To the poor she seemed a ministering angel : her goodness prevented their requests ; and smiles, gentle language, and the warmest expressions of good-will, always accompanied her actions of mercy. The distressed were encouraged to disclose all their wants, by the kindest assurances of relief ; and she treated them with the sweetness and easy goodness of a friend, rather than the superiority of a benefactor. Nor was she inclined to take offence at the appearance of ingratitude in her dependents. When she chanced to overhear some unthankful poor, entertained at her servant's table, murmur at their food, though she had fed on the same herself, she only put this gentle construction on their behaviour, " that they expected something better than ordinary from her table." And she was so far from resenting this indecent delicacy of appetite, that she did not, even at that time, omit the alms she usually gave when any indigent persons were entertained at her house.

It is astonishing how the moderate estate

Mrs. Rowe was possessed of could supply such various and expensive benefactions ; and her own sense of this once broke out to an intimate friend : “ I am surprised,” said she to her, “ how it is possible my estate should answer all these things ! and yet I never want money.” This she only spoke to give honour to the divine blessing ; which, as she was wont to acknowledge with great piety, apparently protected her from losses, and prospered all her affairs. It would be extreme injustice to interpret her expressions of gratitude to the goodness of Providence in a different manner ; for her great care to conceal her charities from the observation of mortals, gives the highest evidence that no love of human applause tainted the purity of her benevolent dispositions. Indeed, her modesty and aversion to the appearance of show and ostentation, caused her to cast such a veil of secrecy over all her beneficent actions, that I fear many of them, highly worthy to be known and imitated by posterity, must remain concealed from the world till that day when they shall be rewarded in the sight of the whole universe, by that almighty Judge who was alone witness to them.

Such an assemblage of virtues as united in Mrs. Rowe’s character could only be the offspring of piety. This divine principle discovered itself very early in her mind ; and since Mr. Grove wrote the former part of these Memoirs, I

have received fresh evidence to confirm his observation, that it is not improbable at the first dawnings of reason she was led to acknowledge and adore the Author of her being, and commence that course of obedience to his laws, which, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, she maintained in every part of her life.

Her writings give a faithful picture of her soul. Her profound humility, and supreme affection to God; her faith in his promises, and dependence on his providence; her zeal for his glory, and love to the holiness of his laws, appear in the strongest light in her works; and particularly in her Devotions, published since her death by the Rev. Dr. Watts. But as it would too much swell these Memoirs to transcribe her sentiments on these heads, I shall only relate the means she made use of to cultivate these excellent dispositions; with the addition of some passages from her manuscripts, that have not yet been communicated to the public.

She devoted herself to the service of God in a solemn covenant. In this she imitated the example of her pious mother, to whose sacred engagement of this kind Mrs. Rowe has made this addition, which evidently appears by the *Hand* to be written in her younger years:—

“ My God, and my father’s God, who keep-
est covenant and mercy to a thousand genera-

tions, I call thee to witness, that with all the sincerity of my soul I consent to this covenant, and stand to the solemn dedication made of me in my baptism : and to this

‘ I God’s high name my awful witness make.’

And thus, with the utmost willingness and joy, I subscribe with my hand to the Lord.

“ E. SINGER.”

And beneath, in the same paper, she writes thus : “ Renewed Sept., 1728. When I am standing before the Judge of all the earth, to be sentenced for all eternity, let this contract be an evidence that I renounce the world, and take the supreme God for my portion and happiness.”

Her manuscript also affords the following larger renewal of this sacred covenant:—

“ LET me renew my vows to thee ; let me repeat the sacred obligation ; let me, if possible, make ties more strong,—more entirely devote myself to thee. With what pleasure do I reflect on the obligations I have to be thine ! I bless the sacred engagement, and would not be free for ten thousand worlds. I never knew a happy moment till I was thine ; all my joys are dated from that happy period ; from thence they took their spring, and from thence they will for ever flow. O ! therefore let me joyfully renew my vows to thee ; let angels instruct me how to con-

firm them ; let them teach me their forms, and give me their flames ; let all be noble, and pathetic, and solemn as their immortal vows. I would bind myself beyond the ties that mortals know ; but I cannot speak with the ardour I wish ; I cannot find words to express the vehemence of my soul : but O ! thou who canst understand these desires, which language fails me to utter, accept the sincerity of my heart, regard and accept my vows ; and O ! let them be confirmed for ever !

“Attend, ye angels ! let heaven and earth hear me ! the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, himself be my witness ! for even to him I dare appeal, from whom no disguise can veil my thoughts ; even thy sacred name I dare attest, whose favour is my only hope, and whose frown is the only thing I can fear : yet my words are not the effect of terror and distress, but of reason and of love. No action of my life was ever more deliberate and voluntary. My soul gives its entire assent, and offers up all its powers ; I make no reserve ; thou hast my whole, my undivided heart.

“O thou that lookest down from the exaltations of thy majesty, that ridest upon the heavens in thy excellency, and from thence dost not disdain to be a father to the fatherless, and the judge of the widow ; I come to thee destitute, and forlorn, and abandoned of every name of joy or confidence upon earth. I have found all the

specious titles and relations among men, to be vanity and a lie: but I rejoice in the conviction, I bless the happy circumstance that has thrown a reproach on all human trust; that has broken my engagements with every thing below, and forced me, friendless and defenceless, to fly to thee. O! receive me with the affection of a father; take me into thy tenderest care and protection! O! remember thy covenant with my pious ancestors, to be a God to them, and their seed after them, by an everlasting covenant. Thy compassions exceed those of the tenderest relation on earth; thou dost delight to exercise loving-kindness and truth in the earth; thou art the God of all grace and consolation: these are thy free, thy natural operations. Fury is not in thee; thy name, thy boasted name, is Love; and thou dost never deviate from its gentle dictates; it is the beginning and end of all thy works, the glorious end thou hadst from all eternity in view: thou dost not withdraw thy eyes from this design, but hast set thy heart upon it from everlasting to everlasting: goodness and compassion for ever flow from thee. Thou canst not restrain those glorious emanations; they will and must for ever stream from thee, the infinite abyss, the spring of goodness, the sum, the plenitude of joy, its never-failing source.

“O, thou hast purchased my soul with thy own blood: before God and angels I put it into thy

custody ; with thee I solemnly deposit the sacred pledge ; into thy hand I commit the precious treasure ; it is my all, my very being : O, form it after thy pleasure, and secure it from the stratagems of hell. I am surrounded with danger, and a thousand snares attend me : I have but one cast for eternity. Look with eyes of pity on my impotence and distress : I fly to thee ; let me find a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest.

“ I am not, I cannot be, my own keeper : flesh and blood is too weak to struggle with principalities, and powers, and the rulers of darkness in high places ; the combination is too strong for unassisted nature to conquer. Thou knowest my strength is weakness, my wisdom folly, my natural light all darkness. I know not the next step before me ; and if I stumble, it will bring reproach on thy holy ways.

“ I am on the Lord's side ; I am in league with thee against the confederacy of hell : I list myself under thy banners, to oppose the kingdom of darkness ; give me strength and wisdom to encounter all opposition ; let me never be left to my own conduct, or dishonour thy cause by any weakness or inadvertency. O thou that dost not slumber nor sleep, watch my goings, and let none of my footsteps slide. O fountain of love and grace, let me feel thy present influences. There is no relation in all nature, so near as that

between God and a virtuous mind : and wilt thou not adorn it with those graces which are capable of being improved for ever ?

“ In the name of the Lord God of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, let me conquer the principalities and powers of darkness. I have taken thy word for my defence, I have fled to the name of the Lord for safety ; let me rejoice, let me triumph in that sanctuary, nor know a thought of diffidence or fear. Let me hope against hope, believe above belief, with confidence worthy of that power on which I trust, and of that veracity which is engaged to protect me. Be the powers of hell confounded, while I make my boast in the Lord, and rejoice in thy salvation !

“ I can, I must, I dare set to my seal, that God is true. I need not scruple to affirm what thou hast attested : I may, without hesitation, give my assent to the words of the living God. Let not my footsteps slide ; for thou art my only Counsellor. Leave me not to choose for myself ; give me no advantage but what I may employ for thy glory ; cancel every prayer that has not been agreeable to thy will. I retract every petition, whose success will not centre in thy interest : it is thee, not myself, I would honour ; it is thee I would live and die for. Make thy own terms, let them be what they will, I take thee for my only portion for this life, and to all eternity.

And with full consent I subscribe with my hand to the Lord.

“ E. ROWE.”

“ *Sept. 11th,* 1735.*”

She practised secret prayer three times a day, as appears by this resolution taken from her manuscript: “ At morning, at noon, and at night, I will praise thee, and pay my constant homage to the supreme and independent Being.” And as she was wont to say, that “ we ought to consecrate our brightest intervals to the service of heaven;” agreeably to these just sentiments, she employed those parts of the day in which she believed the powers of the mind most free and active, as seasons of holy retirement: but (as far as I could judge) her devotions were rather frequent, than protracted to such an undue length as might tend to distract the attention, and fatigue and exhaust the spirits.

She had a high veneration and love to the Lord’s day, which (excepting offices of goodness and compassion) she wholly consecrated to piety and devotion. No slight indisposition, or any severity of weather, prevented her constant attendance on public worship, at which her attentive and reverent behaviour showed the utmost composure and elevation of soul. She also, in imitation of our blessed Saviour’s exam-

* Mrs. Rowe’s birth-day.

ple of doing good on the Sabbath, sanctified the Lord's day, by entertaining a set of poor people at her house, and by an abundant distribution of charity. But her devout regard to the public worship of God will best appear by the following passage extracted from the manuscript volume of her devotions, which I have so often cited :—

“I solemnly set apart one day in the week, (if possible Saturday,) to prepare myself for the noble employment of public worship ; and then let all the powers of my soul be exercised in love and humble adoration. Let me make more sensible approaches to the propitious Being, whom unseen I love ; and let him fill me with the ineffable delights that his presence affords, and make me joyful in the house of prayer ; let me be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of his house, and drink of the rivers of his pleasure.”

She never neglected any opportunity of partaking of the holy communion, for which she had the highest affection and reverence ; and the same manuscript will show what virtuous resolutions she made at such sacred seasons :—

“With every sacrament let me renew my strength, and with the bread of life receive immortal vigour. Let me remember the vows of God, and, at my return to the world, let me commit my ways to thee. Let me be absolutely resigned to thy providence, nor once distrust thy goodness and fidelity. Let me be careful for

nothing, but with prayer and supplication make my wants known to thee. Let the most awful sense of thy presence dwell on my heart, and always keep me in a serious disposition. Let me be merciful and just in my actions, calm and regular in my thoughts: and O do thou set a watch on my mouth, and keep the door of my lips. Let me speak evil of no man; let me advance the reputation of the virtuous, and never be silent in the praise of merit. Let my tongue speak the language of my heart, and be guided by exact truth and perfect sincerity. Let me open my hands wide to the wants of the poor, in full confidence that my heavenly Father will supply mine; and that the high Possessor of heaven and earth will not fail to restore, in the hour of my distress, what I have parted with for his sake.

“O let thy grace be sufficient for me, and thy strength be manifest in my weakness. Be present with me in the hour of temptation, and confirm the pious resolutions thou hast enabled me to form.”

She had an inexpressible love and veneration for the holy Scriptures, and was assiduous in the reading of them, particularly the New Testament, the Psalms, and those parts of the prophétical writings which relate to our blessed Saviour. For some time before her death she scarce read anything but these sacred books, and practical treatises on religious subjects. She was also

wont to assist her improvement in virtue and the Christian life, by frequent meditations on the blessedness of a future state, the perfections of God, particularly his infinite goodness and mercy in the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ; and on other important parts of religion, which appeared best suited to promote devout and holy dispositions. And besides these her usual exercises of piety, in the latter part of her life, she observed some stated seasons of abstinence and extraordinary devotion.

The fervour of her zeal in the cause of religion was beyond the rate of common examples. As she could not command her tears of transport, when she was witness to any eminent instance of piety, so the sinking state in which the interest of religion now appears, and the fatal advances of infidelity in this nation, rent her very soul. She spoke with the highest esteem and gratitude of those excellent persons, who, in the present age, have defended Christianity by their learned writings, and truly venerated them as public benefactors to mankind. She much interested herself in the prosperity of the colony of Georgia. An establishment projected on the justest principles of liberty, and with the most generous views to promote social happiness, could not but give a very sensible pleasure to so benevolent a mind; but her exquisite satisfaction in this design was chiefly owing to her piety, and the hopes she

entertained, that this remote part of the world would be blessed with the knowledge of the true religion. "I do pray," says she, "I cannot help praying, for a glorious success of the Gospel in those dark regions, where the name of the Saviour has not been known. Though the prospect seems gloomy here, it looks bright there, and my soul rejoices in it. God will, no doubt, bless our present government for so good an undertaking: it will shine in history to their immortal honour."

Mrs. Rowe was especially distinguished by the practice of piety; it was the supreme pleasure of her life: yet her own words assure us, that she did not set too high a value on strong emotions of the passions, and religious fervours; nor was tempted by the love of devotion to prefer it to social virtue. For she thus expresses herself in a letter to a noble friend:—"I have written no pious meditations of late. The warmth of devotion, perhaps, as well as other passions, declines with life: but I hope the calm, the reasonable and solid part of religion will be still improved." And in another letter to the same lady, she says, "I have no restitution to make, nor the least known injury to repair. I lay a much greater stress on this part of religion that regards mankind, than I do on any height of devotion, as necessary as I think it, to reconcile the mind to death." She affected no kind of singularity

or appearance of severity, nor presumed to censure those who came not up to that strictness to which she obliged herself. And she was so far from imposing any methods of devout life which she herself used, on others, to whom, on account of their difference of tempers, and deeper engagements in the business of the world, they might be inexpedient, that she did not recommend, or I think so much as mention, them to her most intimate friends; but, on the contrary, studied concealment so much, that it is only from her manuscripts, and the information of her servant, (from whom they could not be hid,) that I have arrived at the knowledge of the greater part of them, since her death.

She possessed a large measure of that serenity and cheerfulness of temper which seem naturally to flow from conscious virtue and the hopes of the divine favour. This happy disposition of mind, which is more than once recommended in the sacred writings, and is so great an ornament to sincere piety, continued with Mrs. Rowe to her last moments, and was never interrupted by any of those fantastic disorders that so often cloud the imaginations of the softer sex; so that (excepting the intervals of sorrow occasioned by her devout and compassionate dispositions, and just affliction for the loss of Mr. Rowe and Mr. Singer) her whole life seemed not only a constant calm, but a perpetual sunshine, and every

hour of it sparkled with good humour and inoffensive cheerfulness.

As it may seem improper to relate the sentiments of a lady who was not versed in controversial divinity, or the erudition of the schools, on subjects that have divided the learned and religious world; I will only take the liberty to say, that she openly avowed what appeared to her to be truth, and defended it with warmth; yet the sweetness of her disposition made her incapable of the impious rashness of those who, without mercy, pronounce a sentence of damnation on all who dissent from them in abstruse and disputable points: but she expressed herself as if it was less necessary to guard against the contrary extreme. For she says, in one of her letters, "My charity is very large, and from this catholic spirit I have often canonized some libertine or atheist for a great saint." Her love of piety was not confined to those of her own party in religion; and it ought to be related as an exemplary instance of Christian moderation, that she continued all the latter part of her life in constant communion with some who differed from her in articles which she thought of great importance; though she was frequently solicited to an opposite conduct by persons of a more narrow spirit; and could not escape censure for her adherence to the charity of the Gospel. And as her zeal did in no part of her life degenerate

into religious fury, so, towards the close of it, her gentle and charitable dispositions increased, and she seemed to be visibly ripening into the temper of that blessed region to which she was soon to be removed.

Her friendships were founded on virtue, but not a perfect agreement in those lesser matters which divide us as Christians and Englishmen ; in which she showed a generous mind, elevated above the mean principles of party and bigotry. She was favoured with the esteem and acquaintance of the Countess of Winchelsea, the Viscountess Weymouth, the Viscountess Scudamore, the Lady Carteret, the Lady Brooke, the Honourable Mrs. Thynne, the Earl of Orrery, Dr. Kenn, Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells, Sir Richard Blackmore, Dr. Watts, Mr. Prior, Mr. Grove, &c. But, above all, she possessed the highest degree of friendship with another illustrious ornament of the age, which as it began as soon as ever her Ladyship was capable of this generous passion, so it continued without the least interruption to the last moments of Mrs. Rowe's life. And it gives me great pleasure that I can conclude the character of a lady whose memory ought to be most dear to me, with this testimony to her virtue and merit ; that her life was honoured with the friendship, and her death lamented with the tears, of the Countess of Hertford.

THE LIFE

OF

THE REV. JOHN M'LAURIN,

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF GLASGOW.

BY JOHN GILLIES, D.D.,

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CHAPTER I.

MR. JOHN M'LAURIN was born in October, 1693, at Glenderule in Argyleshire, where his father was Minister. He was the eldest of three brothers, of whom the second, Daniel, died young, after giving proofs of an extraordinary genius ; and Colin, who was the youngest, is well known to have proved one of the most celebrated mathematicians of the age. Their father dying in 1698, and their mother in 1707, their uncle, Mr. Daniel M'Laurin, Minister at Kilfinnan, took them under his care, and bestowed great pains on them ; to which he was, no doubt, encouraged by the promising appearances of their uncommon capacity and application. While they studied philosophy in the University of Glasgow, they were taken notice of, not only for their diligence, but for their piety, in which the two younger had

Luss, and by all every where who had access to know him. His unaffected Christian piety made him acceptable to many, his learning and ingenious thoughts to others, and his modest and cheerful temper to all; so that, having occasion sometimes to preach at Glasgow, which he did with universal approbation, he was translated thither on an invitation from the city, after the death of the Rev. Mr. Anderson,* and admitted Minister in the north-west parish in 1723, to the great satisfaction of all concerned.

He was now in a sphere that did not allow so much time for his studies as he formerly enjoyed, but was very proper for one who had laid so good a foundation, and had devoted all his time and talents to the work of the ministry.

The pastoral office in Glasgow, by reason of the largeness of the parishes and the multiplicity of necessary or very important duties, is a business of no small labour at any rate; but Mr. M'Laurin's activity and zeal carried him through a great deal more work than ordinary. His calls to visit the sick were uncommonly frequent. He was often consulted by persons that were thoughtful about their eternal interests. He preached once a month to the Highlanders living in Glasgow, in their own language. He assisted in concerting measures for the regular maintenance of the poor; and particularly when the

* Known to the public by his writings.

Glasgow hospital at its first erection met with considerable obstacles, he promoted it with great diligence, and had a chief hand in composing the printed account of that excellent foundation. In all the schemes for suppressing vice and impiety he was a principal mover, and was no less active in carrying them into execution. In his sermons before the Societies for Reformation in Glasgow, he made it his business to inculcate upon the conscientious inhabitants the necessity of doing their part to bear down wickedness, by giving information against offenders, without which the best laws and most zealous Magistrates could avail nothing. He laboured to take off the unjust odium affixed by some to the name of informers, and to show that they who declined giving themselves the trouble of preventing sin in their neighbours were like Cain, who said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The "Account of the Societies for Reformation which arose in England and Ireland about the end of the last century," was a book he read with great pleasure, especially as it narrates the surprising success with which Providence blessed their vigorous endeavours at their first setting out. He was much for encouraging a like spirit, and using like prudent methods, in Glasgow: and although the success of these methods might not be so great as were to be wished, he was not for laying them aside. He heartily agreed with those who think it is the

duty of Christians to improve all the countenance given by human laws for restraining wickedness, because otherwise, bad as we are, we should still be worse. For which reason he greatly approved of the design of the Friendly Society lately erected in Glasgow, who are endeavouring to raise a fund to prosecute such wicked persons as might otherwise escape the law.

But if his zeal and activity were great for the reformation of manners, it was still greater in what regards inward religion. Some years ago, when numbers of people in different parts of the world became uncommonly concerned about their salvation, such an appearance engaged all his attention. He was at the greatest pains to be rightly informed about the facts; and having, from these fully satisfied himself that it was the work of God, he defended and promoted it to the utmost of his power. Nothing gave him so much joy as the advancement of vital religion. This part of the Saviour's temper, Luke x. 21, was exceedingly remarkable in him. With what earnestness used he to apply these words of the evangelical Prophet, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." Being invited by the Ministers in whose congregations the religious concern chiefly appeared, he cheerfully went and assisted

them. He did not consult his own ease, nor his reputation among many who would pass for wise and prudent men, but sacrificed all to what he was fully convinced was the work of God. He was at great pains to procure and communicate well-attested accounts of it both at home and abroad. His correspondence with the Rev. Messrs. Cooper and Prince, and other Ministers in Boston, and the Rev. Mr. Edwards, (then at Northampton, afterwards at Stockbridge,) was always much valued by him, especially at this time.* When he received their accounts, he spread them amongst his acquaintances, and wrote largely to his American correspondents what intelligence he could procure, of the state of religion in Scotland. He met once a week with some Christian friends to receive and communicate religious intelligence, and to converse on religious subjects, which he did with inimitable spirit and cheerfulness.

When those who made a profession of piety were guilty of any thing that tended to hurt the cause of religion, it vexed him to the heart, and bore so heavy on his spirits as to make him restless whole nights.

He encouraged the societies for prayer, which multiplied in Glasgow about this time. With his approbation there was a general meeting

* He had several other correspondents in Boston, and in other parts of New-England, whom he greatly esteemed and loved, particularly Abiel Walley, Esq.

appointed once a month, (which long subsisted,) consisting of a member from each society, with a Minister for their Preses to inquire into the state of the societies and to send more experienced persons to assist the younger sort. And several years afterwards he was the chief contriver and promoter of the concert which hath been complied with by numbers both in Great Britain and America.* And it may be proper to take notice here, that as he was remarkably earnest in his prayers for the public interests of religion, so he was always for beginning every deliberation of importance with prayer. And it was observed, that both as to his expressions and manner in prayer, none could go beyond him for profound reverence, or for freedom, fluency, and holy humble boldness; and very few equal his constant mixture of these in so remarkable a degree.

In the latter part of his life he was uncommonly concerned for the peace of the Church of Scotland. He had all along endeavoured to prevent strife and division to the utmost of his power. What pains he was at in procuring the peaceable settlement of vacant congregations,

* Mr. Edwards wrote a whole book to recommend it, entitled, "An humble Attempt to promote explicit Agreement and visible Union of God's people in extraordinary Prayer," &c. Some account of which may be seen in "Historical Collections relating to the Success of the Gospel," vol. ii., p. 401.

appears in part from papers on this subject found among his manuscripts, and is otherwise well known. He was equally against the extremes of encouraging an unreasonable opposition among the people on the one hand, and of violently imposing Ministers upon them on the other. A call and appointment to the holy ministry by ordination, he thought a very solemn business, and not to be made on any account subservient to political measures. He considered the great design of the sacred function, the edification of the body of Christ, which he thought could never be promoted by violent measures, and fixing a pastoral relation amidst an universal opposition. The arbitrary methods therefore sometimes pursued, in not only appointing and authorizing such settlements, but deposing from the holy ministry such as for conscience sake refused to have an active hand in them, made a very deep impression on his spirit, as a dismal presage of the decay of vital religion, and the pulling to pieces our ecclesiastical constitution. Moved by such considerations, he interposed his most vigorous efforts to stop the progress of so unprecedented and ruinous measures. He acted, and wrote himself; and engaged others, who had talents for it, to write upon the subject; declining no step, however troublesome, unless it seemed to have a tendency to increase the flame.

From this short account of things it appears

how active he was in the matters of public concern, as well as in the more private duties of his office ; so that one would think he could not spare much time for reading, especially as he was obliged to be often in company, persons of all ranks who had any regard for religion being fond of conversing with him. And indeed it was his duty, as well as his inclination, to gratify them. For he had such an inexhaustible fund of edifying pleasant discourse ; such a constant cheerfulness and flow of spirits, attended with the most serious piety ; so obliging a readiness to hear others ; and so unaffected a desire to make all about him happy, that there never was perhaps a man better qualified to recommend Christianity in the way of conversation ; nor were his endeavours this way without success.

Yet, though so large a portion of his time was necessarily employed in action and conversation, he read a great deal to the last. There was hardly a new book of any note, but he made himself acquainted with it ; nay, he found time to study and compose upon a variety of divine subjects. To account for which, we must consider that as he had a very quick apprehension, so he was capable of extraordinary application, attended with a certain earnestness to finish every subject he had once begun. And then he generally retired several months in the summer season to the country, where his studies were

both his business and recreation : for he never seemed to be weary of them, nor to give them up, except when necessarily interrupted.

At what time soever it was, it is certain he did write several valuable composures besides his volume of Sermons and Essays ; such as “ An Essay on the Prophecies relating to the Messiah ;” “ Of the Difference betwixt Enthusiasm and true Christian Piety ;” “ Of the Scripture Doctrine of continued Forgiveness ;” “ Against the Errors of the Mystics ;” * “ A Collection of Remarks on the Evidence of the Miracles recorded in the New Testament.” And several smaller pieces ; namely, “ Letters on Infant Baptism ;” “ A consolatory

* Some have expressed their surprise that he could be at the pains to search into these obscure writers ; but such as have read them without the prejudice of contempt, (which may be more easily done, as some of them were men of a fine imagination and an affectionate heart,) will soon perceive how apt they are to engage a devout reader. Upon several very important points, such as, a constant sense of the divine presence, a supreme love and regard to the Deity, conformity to his will, &c., they speak extremely well. But the great defect of the mystic divinity seems to be, that it overlooks, in a great measure, some of the peculiar doctrines and precepts of the New Testament upon which our all depends ; such as justification by the blood and righteousness of the Saviour, and a zealous care to promote our own salvation and that of others. This Mr. M'Laurin no doubt saw ; and upon this and some other accounts he might justly look upon the mystic scheme as the more dangerous the greater resemblance it bears to real religion.

Letter to Lady Frances Gardiner, occasioned by the Colonel's Death;" "Remarks on Mr. R.'s Manuscript on the Nature of Faith." And some unfinished papers; as, "Remarks on Mr. Stinstra's pastoral Letter;" "Remarks on Lord Bolingbroke's Insinuations against the Scriptures, in his 'Letters on History.'"

There are, perhaps, some of his manuscripts omitted in this list; but from those mentioned, it appears in part, (though his intimate acquaintances only can have a clear notion of it,) how studious he was as well as active. It is indeed hard to say which of the two he was most remarkable for; but he was never idle, and the great principle that visibly animated him all along was a regard to the honour of his Saviour, and a zeal to promote his cause according to the opportunities afforded him.

Notwithstanding his incessant application, he enjoyed a very good state of health, seldom interrupted, except by some fits of a rheum in his head, and a pain and weakness in his eyes.

In spring, 1754, he was feverish for some days, but soon recovered, and was so well as to attend the General Assembly in May, where he had the pleasure to meet with the Rev. Messrs. Tennent and Davies, Agents for the College of New-Jersey; a design which he heartily wished well to, as he did to all that tended to promote Christianity. It gave him great pleasure to see with

what readiness the Assembly granted a collection for carrying on that good design.

After he came home he had frequently in his hands a small volume of Mr. Shaw's pieces, one of which is entitled, "A Farewell to Life." About the end of August he complained much of the rheum in his head, which, notwithstanding the good effects of medicines for a short time, still returned. Yet he preached on Sabbath, August 25th, and went abroad next day, as usual. There were at that time some foreigners in town who were desirous to be introduced to him, on account of the great esteem they had for his brother. As his humane, sociable, and Christian temper made him always behave in a very obliging manner to strangers, he waited upon them with great cheerfulness, and conversed with them in his usual entertaining and facetious way. He was again to have waited on them on Thursday, August 29th, but found himself so much indisposed by the pain in his head, that he could not go abroad. About two in the afternoon he became suddenly so ill, that his memory failed him, and he could not express himself with his ordinary readiness. After that, he had a continual inclination to sleep, attended with a slow fever. At the same time, a little swelling under one of his cheeks increased till it became what the Physicians call an erysipelas. On Sabbath, September 1st, though he did not

speaking with his former distinctness, his discourse, in the intervals of his drowsiness, was in the same heavenly strain it used to be on that day ; repeating many comfortable passages of Scripture, and improving every thing that came in his way as the means of devotion, and a spiritual frame ; taking occasion from the cordials he was using, to speak of the fruit of the tree of life, and of the pure water of life. Afterwards his trouble increased, and carried him off in the sixty-first year of his age, on Sabbath, September 8th, near twelve at night ; the end of a Sabbath on earth being the beginning of an eternal Sabbath in heaven.

He was a man that had a very extraordinary degree of the most valuable gifts and the most lovely graces united in him : a lively striking instance of the truth, and power, and amiableness of Christianity ; quite raised above the world ; employed from day to day in some good design, without the smallest appearance of vanity or ambition, or any interested view ; and in general so free from all discernible failings, that those who were most intimately acquainted with him may be appealed to, whether they could ever observe any ; except that in the decline of life, he sometimes grew too warm in expressing his honest zeal. And even this was, in a great measure, owing to the decay of his bodily constitution ; for he was very uneasy at it himself, and used to desire his friends to put him in mind when he

was in danger of it. And when it had overtaken him, he used, in a very sincere and affectionate manner, to ask forgiveness of the person or company whom he might have offended. As for personal injuries, he always bore them with a patience and meekness that was truly Christian.

There was a perpetual cheerfulness in his temper, attended with that decency of behaviour, and that useful and pertinent discourse, that, in conversing with him, one enjoyed the pleasures of the gayest company along with the advantages of the most serious. His conversation was always pleasant, but never trifling. He was ingenious in making the best improvement of every occurrence. He equally disliked debates and a sullen reserve of temper, and diverted every thing of this kind by introducing what tended to cheer and edify.

He was eminently given to hospitality, and was always ready to distribute to the necessitous to the utmost of his power, if not beyond it.

His kind and affectionate heart to those who were in any sort of trouble, whether of body or mind, was such as cannot well be expressed; and yet even when those who were dearest to him were under threatening diseases, he retained a tranquillity and cheerfulness of temper, always hoping for the most comfortable event; and when deeply afflicted by the disappointment of these hopes, he, on every occasion, overcame the

tenderest grief by the most pious and cheerful resignation.

As a Minister of the Gospel he was very exemplary. The great subjects of his sermons were the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, which were the life of his own soul. In dealing with the consciences of men, he thought the proper method was (according to Scripture pattern, particularly in the Epistle to the Romans) to convince them first of their having broken the divine law, and their being condemned by it, and then to lead them to the blood of Christ. He thought the alienation of the human soul from God in its unconverted state, is a sufficient proof of its depravity and misery. He inculcated the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit. His opinion concerning the nature of faith in Christ was, that it is the receiving of a free gift, and lies much in a supreme and rooted esteem of Christ, and all his benefits, with proportionable desires after them.

He was no bigot. He did not love party names, nor laid much stress upon lesser matters. The grand truths just now mentioned of justification by the blood and righteousness of Christ, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, were the main objects of his attention. When he treated on other points, he made them subservient to these.

The style and method of his sermons, which

were abundantly clear in his ^{younger} days, became afterwards more obscure, so that it was hard to follow him attentively through a whole discourse: but every sentence was a short sermon, and the whole was in the true spirit and strain of the Gospel.

In reproving sin he was very sharp, and severe in the case of insensibility or obstinacy, but far from condemning any person without evidence. When he heard bad reports he was a strict but impartial examiner, and spared no labour to find out the truth. And his inquiries this way were attended with great success, and frequently made the means of vindicating injured innocence and exposing concealed wickedness.

With the same steadiness and application he pursued every good design; whether he was engaged in helping those who needed his assistance or in promoting any public interest, he stuck close to it till he carried it through, if any success was to be expected.

He was much beloved by his brethren in the ministry in general, especially by his colleagues in Glasgow. And what heightened the value of all his other talents and graces, and endeared him to every one, was that humility and self-diffidence that so eminently distinguished him, and appeared in all his behaviour. Particularly when any thing of importance was to be proposed, though he had a great hand in it himself, he

chose the proposal^{*} should come from others rather than from him.

What he was in his family I am at a loss to express. He was so exceedingly and deservedly dear to all his relations, that the description must fall far short of the reality.* Indeed the remembrance is too affecting. Our only comfort is, that his Saviour and ours lives for ever; and that in his blessed presence we hope to enjoy a far happier society together than we even did in this life.

His stature was a little above the middle size; his body pretty strong and nimble. A fair complexion: an honest, open countenance, full of

* In 1721 Mr. M'Laurin married Lillas, daughter of Mr. John Rae, of Little-Govan, by whom he had nine children, of whom four died in their infancy. His son John, a very promising young man, died in 1742, in the seventeenth year of his age. His eldest daughter (spouse to the writer of these Memoirs) died soon after the birth of her eighth child, Aug. 6th, 1754, about a month before her father, whom she very much resembled in a peculiar sweetness and vivacity, and in the most serious piety. "They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided."

Mrs. M'Laurin (a woman of great plainness and integrity, and very dutiful and affectionate to her relations) dying in 1747, Mr. M'Laurin in 1749 married Margaret daughter of Mr. Patrick Bell, of Cow-Caddins. His only surviving children were three daughters of the first marriage; of whom the eldest was married to Mr. John Findlay, Writer, and the second to Mr. Andrew Craig, Surgeon in Glasgow.

cheerfulness, good-nature, modesty, and gravity.* He was liable to be absent and lost in thought; spoke very readily and agreeably; sometimes continued speaking longer than he designed, though he was not tedious, his attention being carried away by the subject. The same amiable simplicity ran through his behaviour. He was a man of an extraordinary genius, joined with great prudence and as great activity, extensive reading, and a competent knowledge of the world, all devoted to the service of God and the Gospel; animated with no worldly views, but with an unshaken and well-grounded belief of Christianity, and a continual joyful hope of heaven.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS TO THE PUBLISHER.

“I WAS entertaining hope that so precious a life would be preserved a while longer for the service of the church of Christ, at a time of so much need. But the Master has seen meet to call home his faithful and wise servant. As we loved him, let us rejoice that he hath gone to his Father; while justly bewailing the loss to his surviving friends, the general loss to the church, to the world. How rare such a character! how

* The proper names of these dispositions in him were joy, love, and humility. See Gal. v. 22.

difficult to find a successor to such a Minister of Christ in any period of the church !

“ It strikes me with pleasant wonder, and excites my grateful praise to the supreme and most gracious Orderer of all that concerns us and our intercourse in the world, that I was led to such close correspondence for some time past as brought me an extraordinary share of communication with that eminent servant of our common Lord, in the very last scene of his life. O may I have grace to improve such a blessing, to excite some measure of that spirit which breathed in every thing that dropped from him !

“ JOHN ADAMS.

“ FALKIRK,
“ *Sept. 10th, 1754.*”

“ I HEARTILY approve the inserting some account of Mr. M'Laurin's character in the preface to his sermons. Since you desire it, I shall hint a few particulars, which I think worthy of your notice. 1. His habitual spiritual-mindedness and devotion, evidenced by frequent ejaculatory prayers and thanksgivings, and by his delight to turn conversation into a religious and edifying channel. 2. His unwearied diligence to promote whatever he thought tended to the welfare of the Church of which he was a member ; his warm concern for the advancement of religion even in the most distant parts ; and his joy

for agreeable appearances of the success of the Gospel. 3. His deep insight into the doctrines and duties of religion, and the most proper methods of removing prejudices and objections against them. The strength of his genius and the solidity of his judgment furnished him with sentiments new and ingenious, and yet solid and convincing, when explaining or vindicating some of the most important articles of our Christian faith. When consulted upon controversies, which seemed quite exhausted by the labours of others, he would often strike new light on the question in debate, and offer a more distinct and satisfying solution of difficulties than had hitherto been advanced. Such was his knowledge of the nature of religion, as equally preserved him from right and left hand errors. He saw and felt, that the true Christian does not act merely for selfish and interested motives; but is animated to duty by love to God, to Christ, and to holiness, flowing from views of their intrinsic glory and excellency; and yet he cautiously avoided the dangerous extremes of enthusiasts and Popish mystics. 4. Boldness, courage, zeal, and faithfulness, in opposing whatever he thought contrary to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. 5. Remarkable humility, which appeared in preferring those to himself who in gifts and graces were much his inferiors; in his excessive modesty, which made him unwilling to publish

his excellent compositions, though frequently importuned by the best judges; and in preaching usually in the plainest and most familiar manner: though many of his manuscripts discover his uncommon genius for abstract reasoning; and in some of them, for example, his sermon on Gal. vi. 14, the sublimest sentiments are expressed in a lively and eloquent manner. There are passages in the above sermon, which will stand a comparison with an excellent paper in the *Spectator* on the same subject. 6. A spirit uncommonly vigorous and active. Few made greater conscience of redeeming the time, and spending every moment in planning or executing something worthy the man and the Christian. One while he is engaged in closet devotions; another, pursuing his studies; then, discharging in the most exemplary manner, the various duties of his ministerial function; then conversing or corresponding with others on subjects of general importance; next approving himself the best and most faithful friend, and the most valuable and affectionate relative. I account it one of the most pleasant and happy circumstances of my life, that for eleven years this eminent servant of Christ honoured me with his friendship, and often profited me by his instructions and advice.

“JOHN ERSKINE.

“CULROSS,
“*Sept. 19th, 1754.*”

ON MR. M'LAURIN.

ADORN'D with learning, taste, and manly sense,
Wisdom with genius, wit without offence ;
Modest, yet resolute in virtue's cause ;
Ambitious, not of man's, but God's applause ;
Each talent that enrich'd his heaven-born mind,
By Jesus given, to Jesus he resign'd.
Swift was his race, with health and vigour blest ;
Soft was his passage to the land of rest.
His work concluded ere the day was done,
Sudden the Saviour stoop'd and caught him to his throne.

END OF VOLUME X.

